

# The Forum Gazette

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New Delhi Tuesday 1-15 July 1986

Fortnightly

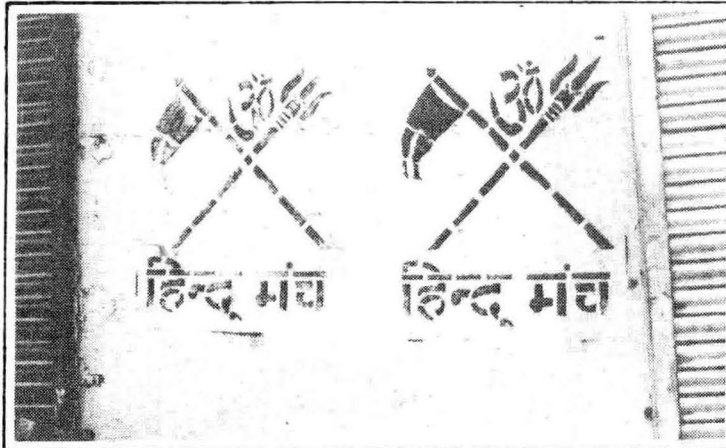
Rupees Two



Courtesy Statesman

Hindu Manch Members demonstrating with Trishuls in Delhi on June 20. The BJP joined up with the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and various Hindu Senas to demand Army deployment in Punjab.

Slogans against the Accord were also heard.



Harji Malik

## The Politics of Trishul Culture

### Delhi's Wave of Hindu Communalism

Ever since Mrs. Indira Gandhi's assassination and the organised carnage of Sikhs in November 1984, Delhi has been scarred by provocative Hindu slogans and posters. On June 20 an unruly demonstration was organised by various Hindu communal organisations like the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, Shiv Sena, Hindu Manch, etc., the BJP included. The demonstration marked the culmination of many days of protest meetings, marches and dharnas against the Punjab Accord. **Inder Mohan reports.**

This is an era of Senas and of the emergence of fundamentalism in sections of various religions. These sections have become so aggressive and volatile that they seem to have overshadowed what could be termed as a balanced assessment of human problems and human beings. Not only that, religion as such is being distorted, and its age-old accepted interpretations of universal peace, brotherhood and

human relationship based on mutual equality are being given the go by.

The most dangerous aspect — one which has virtually become all-pervasive — is the mixing of religion with politics. This has been done so blatantly by all those politicians who have found it a convenient method for either the retention or achievement of power. It would not be an exaggeration to maintain that the surge of Senas is also

due to this particular but grim political reality.

Earlier we had the Hindu Shiv Sena in Bombay, with all its overtones of communalised politics and consequent drastic actions at the cost of innocent lives. Today we have a Hindu Shiv Sena in Punjab, a Hindu Shakti Sena in Delhi, a Hindu Hanuman Sena in parts of U.P. and finally, a Muslim Adam Sena being started in Delhi in order to mobilize the Muslim youth behind it.

The public, by and large, is aware of the role of the Hindu Shiv Sena in Bombay and Punjab, but the Shakti Sena and Adam Sena are a recent phenomenon. It is also a fact that the Shiv Sena, Shakti Sena and Hanuman Sena all function in collaboration. In their own way, the ruling Congress party and the BJP which has now gone back to its old Jana Sangh days, make full use of all these Senas, as and when it suits them for their electoral purposes.

#### Shakti Sena in Delhi

The Shakti Sena of Delhi is of recent origin. Eight months ago, no one had heard of it. Now its

(Continued on P.3 Col. 1)

## Centre Bungles Over Chandigarh

### Bid to Circumvent Accord

Baljit Malik

After Mathew, after Venkataramiah, after Desai, after the Accord What? With the Chandigarh issue still unresolved beyond yet another deadline (June 21), northern India appears to be set to receive a fresh wave of dark clouds accompanied with thunder and lightning, and not only of the monsoon kind. Apart from the senseless (but calculated) wave of killings unleashed by the terrorists and the resultant migration of Hindus to safer havens within and outside Punjab, the Congress-I government of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, has delivered its own mindless blow to prospects of peace and tranquility in the troubled state.

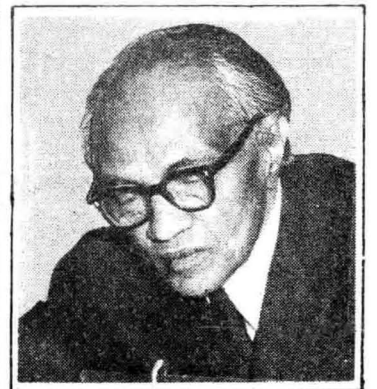
By bungling over Chandigarh and appointing a higher judicial authority in the form of Justice D.A. Desai, (with terms of reference or the lack of them, which flout the Accord) to complete what Mathew and Venkataramiah had left only half done, the Centre has circumvented, if not yet broken the Rajiv-Longowal Accord. The nation might still be a little way away from the war declared on the Accord by the editor of The Times of India in his columns on June 22 and 24 entitled 'Accord is Dead' and 'Scrap Rajiv-Longowal Accord,' but the citizens of this country are being subjected to the home truth of being held to ransom by non-government, or atleast non-performing governments, at the Centre and in Punjab.

The latest episode in the Chandigarh story unfolded itself last fortnight with Justice Venkataramiah declaring that Punjab should part with 70,000 acres of Hindi-speaking territory in lieu of Chandigarh. He also let it be known that 45,000 'Hindi speaking acres' had been identified though these could also come under purview of clause 7.4 of the Accord concerning boundary and territorial questions.

The Venkataramiah Award ran into trouble with the ink still wet on it. The honourable judge failed to identify the additional 25,000 Hindi-speaking acres he wanted transferred to Haryana; suggested the appointment of another commission to undertake this task and then added for good measure that he be excused to head the new commission, for personal reasons as he put it.

#### Haryana's Understanding

Haryana lost no time in accepting the Award, ostensibly with the understanding that the 45,000 acres would not form part of the deal on Chandigarh but would come to it under clause



Justice Mathew

7.4 as a result of the efforts of the as yet unappointed second commission on boundary and territorial matters. Thus Haryana's understanding was that the new commission suggested by Justice Venkataramiah would need to identify another 70,000 acres separate from the 45,000 already identified as Hindi-speaking territory.

The reaction in Punjab was predictable as it was reasonable. Though the so-called national press chose to miss the point, choosing instead to heap ridicule and abuse on Punjab's stand.

#### What Was Punjab's Stand

After a certain amount of dithering, caused no doubt by

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### Inside

- Viewpoint by Ashish Nandi
- White Heat in Black South Africa by Javed Naqvi
- Illustrations by Mickey Patel and Ira Roy
- Spotlight on WHO by Salam Badar
- Short Story by Saadat Hasan Munto



## The Press, the Accord and How Many Acres

We give below excerpts from the Indian Express, The Statesman and The Times of India on events pertaining to Chandigarh's scheduled transfer on June 21, now delayed until July 15.

While the Express and Statesman saw the problems of the past fortnight in a fair-minded nationalist manner, the Times declared its own war on the Rajiv Gandhi—Sant Longowal Accord.

### INDIAN EXPRESS

June 14, 1986

#### What India Expects

It is a thousand pities that Mr Justice E.S. Venkataramiah's award does not follow the wisdom of his own excellent post-script calling on the nation to rise above petty parochialism and be Indian in determining the boundaries of linguistic States. In the event he has suggested that Punjab transfer 70,000 acres to Haryana in lieu of Chandigarh. The Commission itself was able to pick out only 30 villages with a land area of 45,000 acres on the basis of the 1981 census in the time available to it and therefore sought a compromise between the two parties. Since this was not possible, Mr Venkataramiah has recommended that the Government of India appoint yet another commission (which he has himself said elsewhere is a nightmare that Punjab-Haryana should be spared) to determine which Hindi-speaking villages encompassing 70,000 acres should be transferred. He says the two States should be given time to place the necessary material relevant for identification of these areas but goes on to add that the Union Government might even now find it possible to persuade them to come to a mutual agreement without insisting on proof of linguistic composition.

The Haryana cabinet has accepted the Venkataramiah Commission's findings but Punjab can be forgiven for feeling that Mr Venkataramiah strayed beyond his terms of reference and has appealed to the Centre to review his recommendations.

The national interest would be best served by a fresh initiative. There is no need to appoint yet another commission. Mr Venkataramiah has identified 30 Hindi-speaking villages (45,000 acres) that could go to Haryana. Let these villages be transferred to Haryana on June 21 in lieu of Chandigarh. Let there be no insistence by Haryana on securing additional acreage to make up the supposed magic figure of 70,000 acres. Mr Bansi Lal and his colleagues in the ruling party and the Opposition should be big enough and Indian enough not to demand this pound of flesh. Pressure and agitation to secure this and more can only lead to sorrow. Let them pay heed to Mr Venkataramiah's eloquent plea which he so unwisely discarded in framing his own Award. He reminded the country of Lincoln's warning that "a house divided against itself, cannot stand." There is only one citizenship in India and nothing like an exclusive homeland for an Indian inside India. No religion owns a language. In whichever State they be, Fazilka, Abohar and other border areas will remain forever India. It is not too late to rise to statesmanship and put India first.

### THE STATESMAN

June 22, 1986

#### Tragedy and Farce

During his undistinguished tenure of office as Chief Minister of Punjab, Mr Surjeet Singh Barnala has done at least one good thing: he has prevented the Centre from perpetrating a fraud on the people and making a mockery of the institution of judicial or quasi-judicial review. When on Friday Mr D.A. Desai, a retired judge of the Supreme Court, was appointed to determine which areas of Punjab were to be transferred to Haryana in lieu of Chandigarh, he was given less than 24 hours to complete a task which two earlier Commissions, also consti-

tuted by former Supreme Court judges, had failed to accomplish in months. If the proposed timetable had been followed, Mr Desai's exercise would have been a farce; equally farcical would have been the rest of the formal procedure to complete the transfer of territory on Saturday. Possibly the Government itself had decided on the areas that Punjab would be asked to give up, and Mr Desai was expected only to present this as his own finding, at best after a cursory review of the official exercise. If so, it is most extraordinary that a retired judge of the highest court in the land and Chairman of the Law Commission should have agreed to be a party to this make-believe. Mr Barnala has done a service to all by rejecting the proposal.

### THE TIMES OF INDIA

June 22, 1986

#### Accord Is Dead

As had been anticipated by us more than once by inference, if not explicit statement, the Rajiv-Longowal accord has finally collapsed. This is the obvious implication of the Punjab government's decision to reject the D.A. Desai Commission which Mr Gandhi has appointed in a bid to salvage something out of the wreckage. The Prime Minister has gone so far as deliberately to confuse the terms of reference of the new commission at the instance of the Punjab chief minister, Mr S.S. Barnala. But this has not helped him. He is not just back to square one. He is in a much worse plight than he was in before the accord last July. He is completely stuck for any kind of policy on Punjab.

### THE TIMES OF INDIA

June 24, 1986

#### Scrap Rajiv-Longowal Accord

#### Chandigarh Not For Killing By GIRILAL JAIN

The Union government should take advantage of the Punjab government's rejection of the D.A. Desai commission and declare that since it is no longer possible to implement the Rajiv-Longowal accord, it stands scrapped. To be candid, we are not recommending such a course of action only because we are convinced (which we are) that the accord contains contradictions which cannot be reconciled. We are commending it primarily, because we are convinced that Chandigarh must not be transferred to "Punjab".

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# १६ Divine Mission

Guru Gobind Singh . . .  
His was a kind of life that is  
unmatched  
by anyone anywhere . . .

If dharma has survived in its homeland, India, it is because such noble souls were born here from time to time to keep alive its flame.

Dasam Granth or the Book of the Tenth Guru, a monumental work of inspirational poetry, was written by the Guru at Damdama Sahib where he got some respite from the ruthlessly pursuing Moghul armies of Aurangzeb. During this period, Aurangzeb wrote a pleading letter, filled with many a hypocritical appeal, to the Guru but Guru Gobind Singh replied with his **Zafer Namah**, the epistle of victory. This letter penned in his darkest hour proved to be the brightest hour of his life! The Guru explained why he had taken up sword against the emperor. It is an advocacy that has no comparison on why people resort to the sword and rise against the State. Here is an excerpt:

Bibaayad tu daanash parasti kuni.

Bakaaray shumaa cherah dasti kuni, 77

Chihaa shud ki choo bachgaa kushtah chaar.

Ki bakee bimadast pechidah maar. 78.

Chi mardee ki akhbar khamoshaa kuni.

Ki aatash damaaraa badauraa kinu. 79.

Chi khush guft Firdosiy khush zubo.

Shitabee bavad kaar aahar mannaa. 80. (1392)

You (emperor Aurangzeb) use your wisdom and act quickly:

Do reply to this letter as early as possible. 77.

What did it matter if you killed my four sons?

After all, the cobra (me) is still living to punish you.

What manliness is it to extinguish some burning coal.

When the raging fire is spreading in all directions? 79.

How beautifully the poet (Firdausi) has summed it up:

"The evil act quickly, thus hastening their doom." 80 (1392)

From his autobiographical poem **Vichitra Natak** (The Resplendent Drama) one understands just how intensely devoted Guru Gobind Singh was to his mission of upholding righteousness and punishing evil-doers. He writes:

Hum he kaaj jagat mo aay, Dharam het Gurdev pathhaay,

Jaha taha tum Dharam bithaaro, Dusht dokhian pakar pacchaaro. 42.

Yahi kaaj dharaa hum janman, Samajh leh sadhu sabh manman.

Dharam chalaavan sant ubaaran, Dusht sabhan ko mool ukhaaran. 43.

I Have come into this world for this purpose.

The supreme Guru has sent me to protect Righteousness:

"You should propagate righteousness everywhere.

Seize and destroy the sinful and the wicked." 42.

I have taken birth for this purpose.

Let the holy men understand this in their minds.

I have come for spreading divine religion and protecting saints.

And for annihilating (uprooting) all the tyrants. 43 (57).

And this quotation, the Guru's hymn, from **Chandi Charitra**:

Deh Siva bar moh ihai, subh karman tay kabahoo na taroo.

Na daroo ur so jab jaah laroo, Nischay kar apnee jeet karoo.

Ar Sikh hoo apnay hi mun ko, lh laalach hau guna tau uchroo.

Jab aav kee audh nidhaan banay, Ut hi run mai tab Jujh maroo.

Grand me this boon O Lord I may never be deterred from doing good deeds.

I should have no fear of the enemy.

When I go to battle, let victory turn to my side.

Let one directive guide my mind exclusively.

That I may ever be zealously singing Thy praises.

And when the time comes, I should die.

Fighting heroically on the field of battle, (99)

Thus, it is apparent that Guru Gobind Singh was as great a psychologist as he was a poet and a warrior. He gave to the Khalsa the war-cry of **Sat Sri Akal** which epitomises the highest spiritual knowledge of the land and gave visions of **Raj Karega Khalsa** which means the Khalsa alone shall rule. This comes very close to the expression: **Satyameva Jayate**. As leader of men engaged in a mortal combat where odds were as bad as one to one thousand, the Guru emerges without a parallel in Indian history.

An excerpt from P.K. Nijhawan's introduction to his **Sri Guru Gobind Geeta**.



## Politics of Trishul Culture

(Continued from p.1 Col. 3)

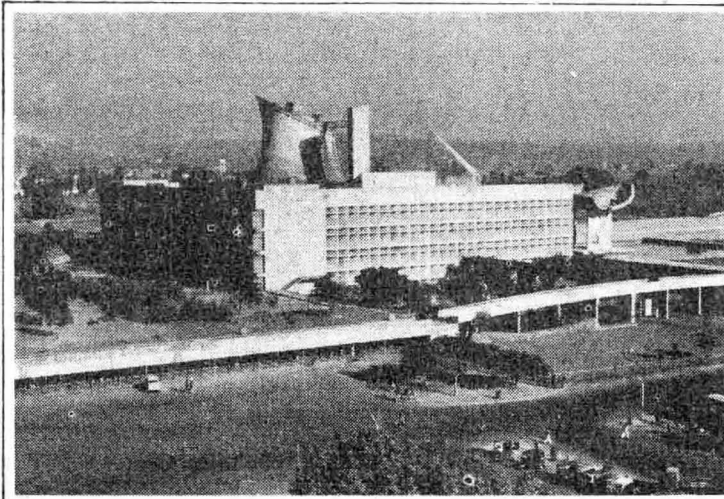
units are spread all over the slum colonies of East and West Delhi as well as most of the trans-Jamuna colonies, which are euphemistically described as 'resettlement colonies' by the authorities. As a matter of fact, the idea of a Shakti Sena was conceived during the November 1984 carnage in Delhi. In those days, trishuls with long handles were a common sight in many Delhi localities. They were being brandished by deliberately instigated and intensely communalised elements to terrorize minority communities in the capital, particularly innocent Sikhs and their families. The Sena as such was organized subsequently. The first step was to plaster public walls in congested areas of Delhi, including slum colonies, populated by and large by the lower middle class or poorer sections of the people. These walls were covered by either posters bearing provocative slogans or by similar slogans stencilled directly onto the walls.

Most prominent was the emblem of the trishul crossed with a sharp-edged, axe-like chopper, with 'Hindu Manch' inscribed between them. This can be seen all over Delhi, with

the walls and thirdly that no action has as yet been taken against the provocateurs. At present, the Shakti Sena has not less than 25,000 regular members. This may be a conservative estimate. As days and weeks pass, the Sena's numbers continue to swell. Each member wears the latest design trishul. Weekly meetings are held in various Shiva temples, some of which have existed in parts of Old Delhi for a long time, while others have sprung up recently. They are concentrated in slum colonies, whose residents comprise basically, the rural poor. These colonies include those affected during the ghastly incidents of November 1984. They are also seen lurking in areas of Old Delhi where the Muslim population is high. Why is all this being permitted to take place? Where do these elements get their vast funds? What is the source of all such resources? **Lastly, why is such blatant communal propaganda being sanctioned? These are some of the questions which have remained unanswered by the Government. It is because certain elements within the Government or the ruling**

## Chandigarh — A Solution For Whom?

Jasjit Purewal



*In the matter of Chandigarh's impending transfer to Punjab there is little visible evidence of how the political will is going to affect the city and its 500,000 people. Yet there is a consensus in public opinion, and a majority of the population both Hindu and Sikh, are for the status quo. "We are being sold to the political interests of these States and we want to belong to neither" says Avinash Kumar, a shop-owner in the prestigious 17 Sector. "Once we lose our Union Territory Status we will automatically lose our immunity to the social and political chaos existing in Haryana and Punjab," fears Prem Kumar.*

*We deserve a referendum at least, and in any case what is the logical argument against a Union Territory?" asks H.S. Malik a Sikh businessman. Why not indeed?*

There is no simple answer today to this very pertinent question, though ironically the Chandigarh issue has been represented at all three levels of the democratic process; the political, the judicial and of course the human factor. And yet all have proved both singularly and collectively ineffective in resolving Chandigarh's dilemma. Let us briefly examine the role and effect of all three in context to Chandigarh since its inception.

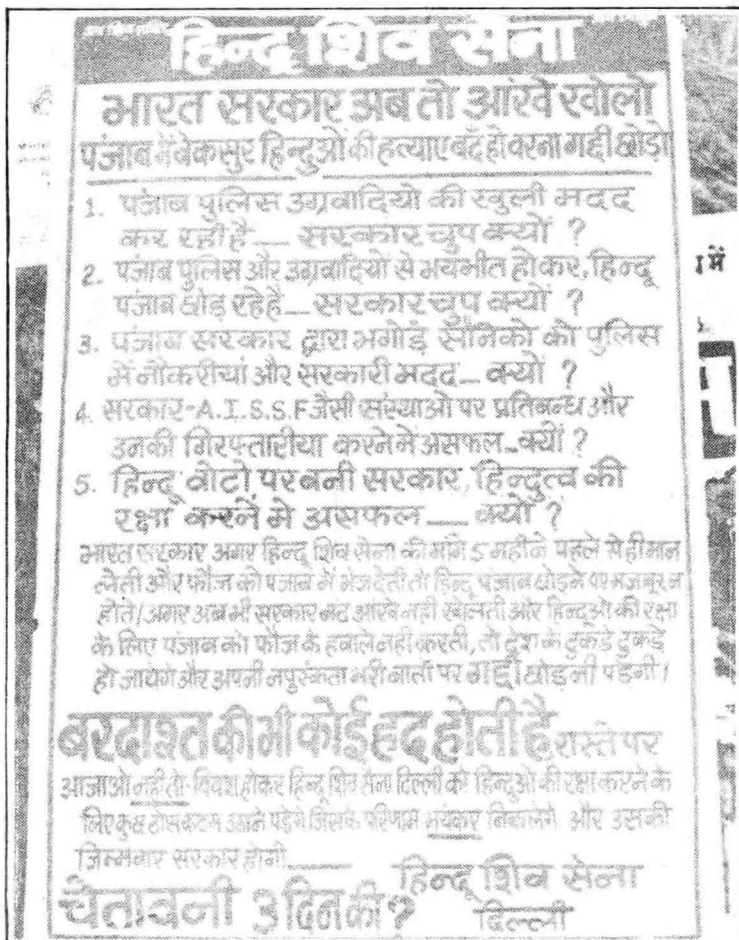
In 1951, Nehru envisioned this new city not only as a lofty "symbol of the spirit of emancipated India" but more importantly in principle for an undivided Punjab. Once the boundaries of Punjab were re-

defined the premise of Chandigarh's conception changed immediately and visibly and with it the socio-political ramifications of its status. A union-territory was the most logical derivative of the original principle, but unfortunately the decision was made neither permanent nor irrevocable. Predictably it became a political platform par excellence for both Haryana and Punjab. Mrs. Gandhi's award in 1970, caused yet another shift in Chandigarh's status and finally and irrevocably severed the issue from its original framework. **Chandigarh no longer embodied a principle but was now a political prize but with a price.** Acquisition

fever intensified in both states but now public opinion was being coerced at every front, sectarian, religious and communal. Pheruman, Fateh Singh and Indira Gandhi had now become a distinct, inviolable, unfortunate legacy.

Now the issue was clearly and overwhelmingly an emotional one. Refuge was sought in the judiciary, though realistically it was clearly a stage when the judiciary was ill-equipped to handle it. For, the judicial solution had to be based on two basic pre-requisites: (a) that the terms of reference of the entire issue be clearly defined and had not been lost through political arbitration or sentiment and (b) that the final decision of the judiciary would be imposed defacto. Neither condition was met and a record of 4 Judicial Commissions contributed only contradictions in esoteric jargon.

The ultimate and most important component of the democratic process is obviously the human factor. It is precisely the people of Chandigarh who stand to lose in this arbitrage. Ironically the masses of Haryana and Punjab stand to gain nothing in this exchange except emotional satisfaction and narrow political dividend. Significantly the dangerous developments in the social fabrics of Haryana and Punjab will, after the transfer, become part of Chandigarh's reality. They stand to gain nothing but feel, in the words of a veteran Chandigarh army officer, "Our culture and options of survival are actually under threat, and frankly we feel short-changed by this situation in which we have no say." What about the people of Chandigarh? How will the democratic process incorporate their rights? The struggle between Punjab and Haryana has somehow managed to overlook them entirely.



the probable exception of a few neighbourhoods of the rich or the sophisticated, which have come to be known as 'posh' areas. Other commonly seen slogans are: "Sab Hindu ek hon (all Hindus should unite), Hindu ekta zindabad (long live Hindu unity), Hum Sab Hindu hain (we are all Hindus), Sab Hindu ek hon..." Nowhere can one spot people being exhorted to unite as Indians.

When one considers posters carrying more provocative details in the context of happenings in Punjab, or as a sequel to the sudden reopening of the Ayodhya temple and the controversy regarding the Babari Mosque, one is surprised that the Government has permitted such posters — firstly to be printed, secondly to remain on

**party, which were directly involved in the November 1984 killings, are supporting such elements even today?**

### Offensive Poster

A new poster, put up in the name of the Hindu Shiv Sena, appeared during the second week of June 1986. Its language is both offensive and provocative. Amongst other things, it challenges the Rajiv Gandhi Government on grounds that despite having won the elections on the strength of the Hindu vote, it has failed to protect Hindus, particularly in Punjab. It threatens most drastic consequences if the Government does not deploy the army in Punjab. The remaining contents of the poster need not be quoted here as that could constitute a violation of the law. The most extra-

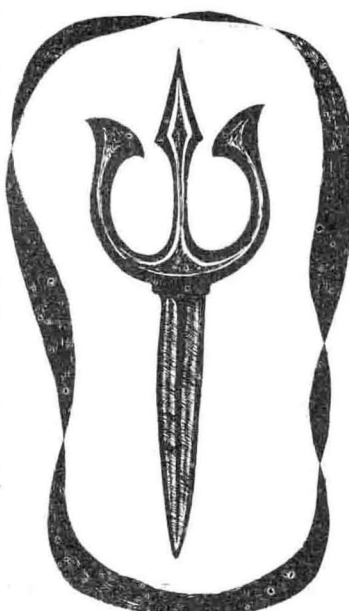
ordinary aspect of this poster is that not only has it been posted all over the city (perhaps in other cities as well) but has been allowed to remain on the walls until the time of writing. All efforts to elicit a reaction from the police or the concerned authorities with regard to these developments, including the formation of the Shakti Sena have remained futile. The police officials maintain that they are not supposed to discuss such matters with the public or with anyone. The administrators plead that these issues are too sensitive for discussion and that the politicians should tackle such problems.

The latest Hindu Shiv Sena poster in particular and those adopted by the Shakti Sena etc., establish another fact. There is no difference between their policy and that of the BJP and RSS. All clamour for the deployment of army and talk in terms of Hindus and not of Indians. At the same time, there is hardly any line to be drawn between communal elements within the Congress (I), the Government and the BJP etc. So far as any effort to contain or curb communal elements is concerned, all of them have been found

miserably, even criminally lacking in this respect. It seems rather obvious that both the Congress (I) and BJP are vying with each other to consolidate the Hindu vote in their favour.

### BJP Crying for Army Deployment

It may not be out of place to mention here that the BJP, through its supporters has been crying itself hoarse for the de-



ployment of army in Punjab. The party has been offering satyagraha in Delhi to this effect. The BJP has conveniently overlooked the fact that when the army had to take over in Punjab for a fairly long period, it failed to solve any problems whatsoever and instead created more complications and a great deal of antagonism. Nor has the army been able to bring about any solution in the North Eastern belt during the last two decades or so. The BJP, in spite of its communalised politics also professes to abide by Gandhian Socialism (whatever it might mean). If this were really so, then the BJP and its followers should have spread themselves in the very areas of Punjab where they demand deployment of the army. They should have striven to preach and promote communal harmony and amity through practical action. Gandhiji would certainly have done that. By resorting to a satyagraha stunt in Delhi and not being with the people of Punjab, the BJP is playing a dirty game of power politics and adding to communal antagonism. Here again, the Congressmen and other political parties have failed to stand by the people of Punjab in their time of ordeal.



# White Heat in Black South Africa

Jawed Naqvi

On 26 June the people of South Africa commemorated the declaration of their Freedom Charter against the tyranny of Apartheid. The White regime on its part has been arming itself with belligerent Emergency powers to ward off the threat to its existence which the Charter has come to signify for over 30 years. The regimes recurrent nervousness is understandable for the very keynote of this hated charter is Equality.

This is sounded in the preamble's call for the building of a democratic state "without distinction of colour, race, sex or belief." An identical note is struck in the clauses on government, proclaiming equality of rights for all persons "regardless of race colour or sex." The principle is extended to national groups.

In the liberated South Africa:

- All people shall have equal rights to use their own language and to develop their own folk culture;
- All laws which discriminate on grounds of race colour or belief shall be repealed; while
- The preaching and practice of national, race or colour discrimination and contempt shall be a punishable crime.

In its affirmation of Equality the Charter is consistent with the mainstream of world opinion

reflected in the Charter of Human Rights, and the conventions and resolutions of the United Nations that reject discrimination.

World opinion has taken a great leap forward since the end of World War Two towards an accepted doctrine of equality of rights and freedoms. Contributory factors include the defeat of the Nazi-Fascist Axis, decolonisation, the strengthening of the socialist sector and the emergence of the newly independent African and Asian states, former victims of colonial rule. There has been a shift in the balance of power, one that favours the struggle against social evils of which racist South Africa is the supreme embodiment.

Although the South African liberation movement has singled out racism, colonialism and Apartheid as its main enemy, its complement is a positive determination to unite South Africans of all national groups in a common cause for a single culture. This also was the vision of the founders of the African National Congress in 1912 and it has gained rather than lost credibility in the years that followed.

The closer South Africa advances towards a unified society, the greater will be the resistance from divisive forces represented by 'tribalism' and 'racism'. As Jack Simons an acknowledged anti-Apartheid activist put it "Racism and tribalism occur in a class society in which differences of language and culture and language become an adjunct to the primary cleavage between the owners of property and the propertyless workers." Thus, the exploiting classes, trading in South Africa as a national or racial category, perpetuate their supremacy by dividing the dispossessed into competing groups, fighting one another for land, jobs and power instead of

combining their forces for united action against the oppressor.

The founders were radical liberals rather than socialist egalitarians. In spite of the transition to revolutionary armed struggle after 1961, the ANC has adhered to the original programme of uniting "all tribes and clans of various tribes or races and by means of combined effort and united political organisation to defend their freedom, rights and privileges."

Tribalism and racialism, are therefore, two sides of the same coin. Dominant classes manipulate the differences to suit their interests. The history of South Africa is saturated with the 'divide rule' strategy used by colonialists, settlers and their governments to conquer and subdue. Bantustans, the tri-cameral parliament, an emerging Black bourgeoisie are products of this divisive strategy. The Freedom Charter threatens these axioms of inequality.

Testimony to the achievement of the liberation movement is provided by the fact that nobody today dares challenge the credentials or content of the Freedom Charter. Even the racist President Botha attempts to dress the hideous carcass of his Apartheid offspring in the clothing of the Charter. Addressing the Cape Nationalist Party Congress in Port Elizabeth last September he said:

"I advocate on behalf of the government reform because it is the philosophy of the (ruling) National Party since its founding. We are the party of reform. We are the party of freedom. We are the party of liberty. We are the party of hope in South Africa."

Time was when the Nationalist Party openly asked for support for the policy of Apartheid and came to power in 1948 on the promise that it would pre-



Nelson Mandela — still in prison; still strengthening the struggle against Apartheid.

serve white domination for ever. Not any more. The very word Apartheid is today disowned by its practitioners, and Mr Botha's claim that he is working for reform is in itself an admission that the system over which he presides is immoral. The list of changes for which he claimed credit is not very long:

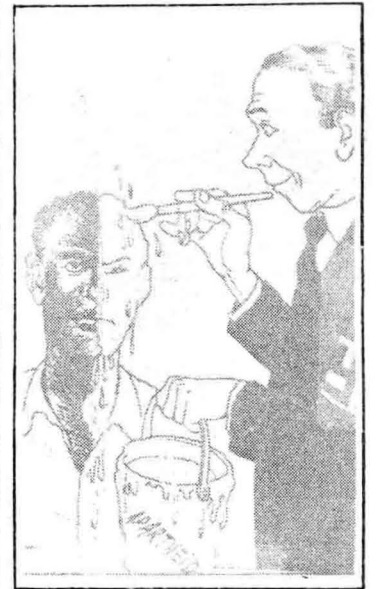
1. The new constitution establishing separate chambers for Whites, Coloureds, and Indians (but excluding the African majority)
2. The repeal of the Mixed Marriages Act and section 16 of the Immorality Act. Repeal of the Act banning mixed political parties.
3. The scrapping of the provincial system and the establishment of regional service councils.
4. Changes in labour legislation.

5. The right of property ownership plus the establishment of a Southern African Development Bank and the support of the Small Business Development Corporation.

6. The establishment of a common citizenship for all South Africans.

The fact that what President Botha calls "unrest" or "terrorism" has risen to a peak precisely since these so-called reforms were introduced is proof enough that his offerings are unacceptable to the people.

It is all very well for Mr Botha to trumpet: "My party and my government are committed to the principle of a united South Africa with one citizenship and with universal franchise," when the words which follow show that he is committed to nothing of the sort — "but within the structures chosen by South Africans ... Naturally, the principle of a united south Africa includes



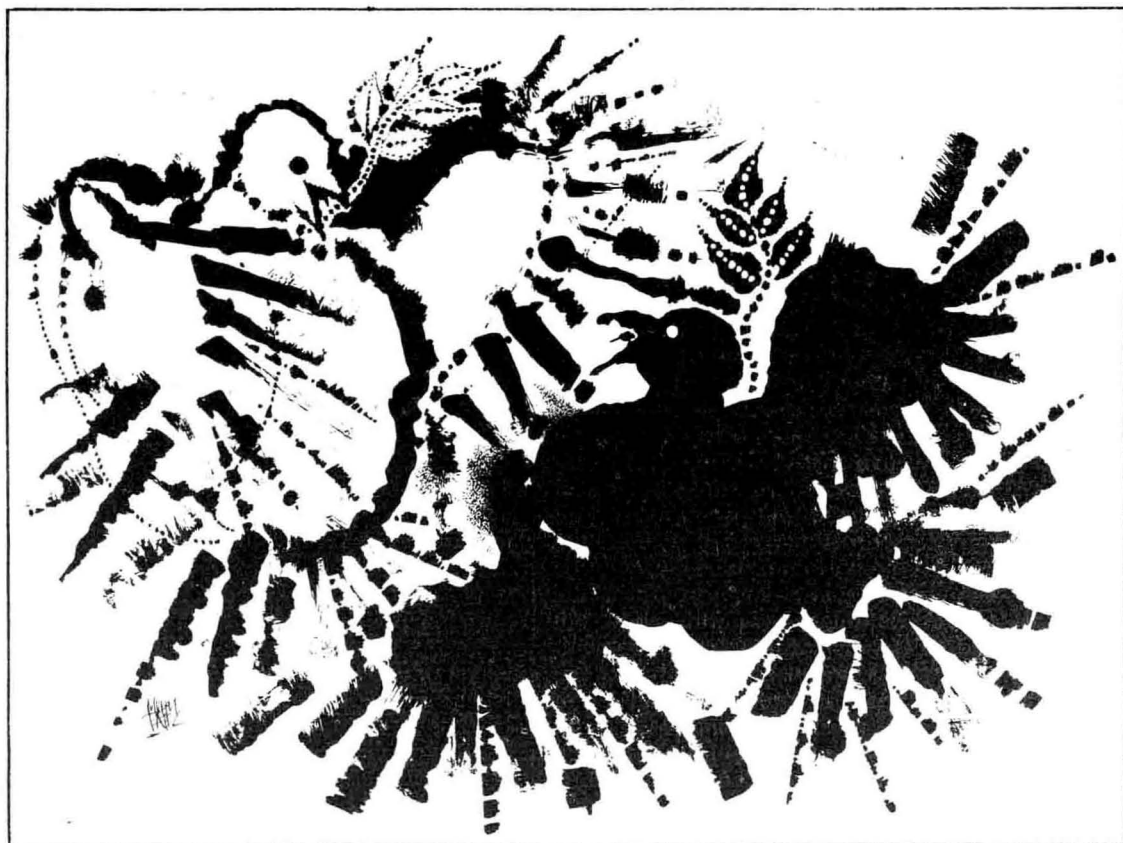
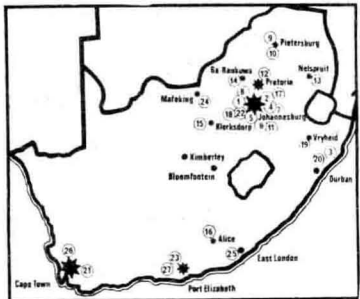
Whitewashing Apartheid

the reality and the desirability of territorial and border divisions within South Africa, such as for example provincial borders for purposes of provincial government, and territory for each of the self-governing states, and jurisdiction areas for systems of local and regional authorities, also in urban areas." Naturally, Apartheid is dead. Long live "structures" and "divisions".

In other words the essential elements of discrimination will remain the Population Registration and Group Areas Acts, the Bantustans, the segregation and oppression which makes life a hell for blacks.

The latest news from Pretoria collated in spite of the censorship under the current spate of Emergency indicates a liberation movement is building into white heat. Major government installations have been blown up in and around Durban and other cities. Nineteen eighty six after all has been declared as the year of the Peoples' Army.

## THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN UPRISING 1976





# WHO IS CREATING KHALISTAN?

Harji Malik

This happened in Jodhpur in March. Well known photographer and wild life film-maker Tejbir Singh travelling with a foreign colleague on a professional assignment, arrived at the Ajit Niwas, a small, private hotel in Jodhpur at about 10 p.m. When the Austrian colleague went to register for them both—Tejbir was occupied with their equipment—the manager, on seeing Tejbir's name, asked to see him. Tejbir has a flowing, greying beard, and when the two film makers were passing by the Reception on their way to dinner, the manager called to him and asked him for his identification. Surprised at this query, and annoyed, Tejbir said he was not in the habit of carrying around identification in his own country. The manager then asked him to note down the name of his father. Tejbir asked why he was required to do this, to which the manager replied that it was the law. Tejbir, stating that he had never run into this requirement in any hotel in India before, leafed through the register and told the manager that he saw no mention of "Father's name" against any other entry. (This is a hotel catering largely to foreign tourists but also to Indians.)

## Aren't Sikhs Indians?

The manager insisted that this was the law, and then added that these were police orders. Tejbir asked "Do you ask every guest for identification and for the father's name?". The manager replied in the negative, but added that he had orders to ask every SIKH for this information. "Do you ask this of every INDIAN?" asked Tejbir. "Of course they are" said the manager. "But we still have to ask them. These are the orders." When asked whose orders, he replied "Police orders". Tejbir said he would like to see the orders in writing so he could take up the matter with the concerned authorities. But the manager said he had only verbal instructions. Angry words were exchanged. The manager said

*Terrorist killings of innocent people are condemned by every rational human being. The communal divide being deliberately created and widened by those who want the destabilization of this country threatens the fabric of our society. But at the same time we must not forget that Sikh alienation, which serves the interests of our enemies, is being intensified by many incidents provoked by a mistrust of the entire community, generated initially, cynically and deliberately for electoral purposes by official-cum-party propaganda since 1982. This propaganda portrayed all Sikhs as potential secessionists and terrorists. Such incidents—sometimes a result of 'official' guidelines not admitted openly—, no matter how trivial they may seem, are in danger of alienating Sikhs who have never considered themselves anything but Indian.*

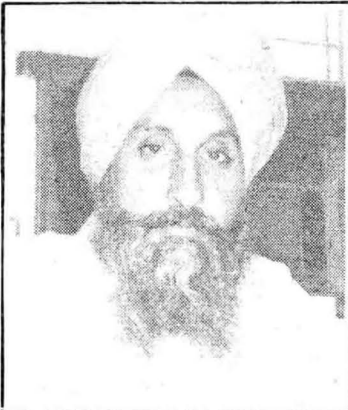
*As always in such an environment, rumours are rife and people are ultrasensitive and it is impossible to check on every incident or scotch every rumour. To give just one example. The Forum Gazette was told that in a certain residential area in Delhi notices regarding houses for rent had been put up in the Community Centre, specifying that Sikh applications would not be considered! On personal investigation this was found to be a false bit of information. However we give below two incidents which are known to us through first hand information. Our aim in publicising such incidents is to make the public realize that happenings such as these, if not stopped, will ultimately make every Sikh question whether he/she is in actual fact an equal citizen in his/her own country. We also publish on page 9 a poem sent by a non-Sikh poet which is the kind of 'healing touch' we hear so much of.*

Tejbir would not be welcome on his return journey, and an angry Tejbir told him that he had no intention of staying a moment longer in the hotel and walked out. On the return to Delhi, not wanting to face any further insults of this kind, the two film makers did not stop in Jodhpur.

Contacted in the office of the Commissioner for Rajasthan, the Liaison Officer told the *Forum Gazette* that no orders had been issued by the State authorities requiring Sikhs registering at hotels to show identification or give any information other than what is asked of all Indians. But told that this incident had actually taken place he admitted that perhaps local police had issued such orders on their own. He promised that the matter would be investigated if brought to the notice of the authorities. But the harm has been done.

## Himachal Incident

In another incident reported in the *Statesman* (Delhi 16 June 1986) two Sikhs families related how they had run into unpleasantness in Barog Tourist Complex on their way back from Shimla to Delhi. Mr. J.P. Singh and Mr. J.S. Sethi, the latter a



**Tejbir Singh: Known film-maker, photographer and production editor of the cerebral journal, 'Seminar' singled out for discriminatory treatment in a Jodhpur hotel. Only because he is a Sikh and sports a long open beard.**

retired Air Force officer told the *Statesman* that although bookings for their family at Barog had been confirmed in Shimla, when they arrived at the Tourist Complex and asked for their rooms, they were informed that there were no bookings. When they insisted on seeing the reservations book and saw that Mr. J.P. Singh's name had been written

and then semi-obliterated, and pointed this out, the manager, Mr Madhusudhan is alleged to have lost his temper and shouted that he had instructions not to allot rooms to Sikhs.

When Mr Sethi booked a call to Shimla to confirm the bookings, Mr Madhusudhan is said to have snatched the telephone out of his hands when the call came through and pulled out the wire. He then ordered the families out of the complex. They have written a letter of protest to the Chief Minister of Himachal.

Contacted by the *Forum Gazette* the Himachal Commissioner's office in the capital said that there had been a misunderstanding, that no such orders exist—"Our tourist complexes are full of Sardars" we were assured and Mr Madhusudhan, "one of our finest officers" would never behave like this. The reservations had been for the previous day, hence the lack of accommodation. He admitted that there had been an "altercation" but that in fact "the receptionist was manhandled" by one of the visitors. A contradiction had been issued by the Government

following an enquiry the office stated.

However on further enquiries by the *Forum Gazette*, both Mr J.S. Sethi and Mr Jaspal Singh confirm what the *Statesman* had published. The bookings were made in the Shimla Office of Himachal Tourist by Mr Suri and the call from Barog was booked to him and did in fact come through while the two Sikh tourists were there. They confirm that the manager pulled out the telephone wire. When they registered the complaint in the Complaint Book, (Complaint No. 152 on June 10) the manager snatched the book from them. They repeat that Mr Madhusudhan told them that the Tourist Complex was not meant for Sikhs and preference would be given to non-Sikhs.

In Chandigarh they consulted a lawyer, Mr Tejwant Singh Doadia, and it is he who has written a letter on their behalf to Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh pointing out the "communal and anti-national attitude" of the manager. Copies have been sent to the Prime Minister, the Home Minister, the Director of Tourism, Himachal Pradesh and the Chief Minister, Punjab. Since no reply has been received from the Chief Minister, Mr Tejwant Singh, on his clients' behalf, has issued a notice to the Secretary, Dept. of Tourism, HP., under Section 80 of the Civil Procedure Code, stating that unless the clients receive a written apology they will be filing a suit for damages.

In a letter to the *Statesman* (June 25 1986) the manager of Himachal Bhawan has stated that an enquiry has been held and has given Mr Madhusudhan's version of the event. Mr Sethi and Mr Singh wonder how such an enquiry was held without their knowledge. They had specifically stated in the letter to the CM that if an enquiry was held they would be available to give evidence. They have not been approached by the HP Government at any time.

## Our Roving Ear and Eye Informs Us

Recently there was a dinner meeting of economic editors with government officials at the Ashok Hotel.

Seated at one of the tables was a senior editor of a Bombay and Delhi based daily which claims to keep time for India. This particular worthy is reported to have made a remark spiced with tandoori chicken and whiskey that there could be no solution in Punjab without bumping off about a lakh or so members of a particular community

known for its beards and turbans.

Unfortunately for the 'time-keeping' editor, a lady from the same community, an officer of a government information department, happened to be at the same table. She went red in the face and there followed a duel of wordy fisticuffs.

The sparring 'partners' were eventually separated by a one-man peace-keeping force in the form of a senior editor (a christian) shortly due for retirement.

## This Is It!

A small African nation recently announced that it urgently needed the services of a one-handed economist.

"One-handed economist?" people asked, a trifle surprised. "Yes" they insisted "because in the past all econo-

mists who have come to us as advisors have recommended in their reports — "On the one hand... but on the other."

So we are now putting our foot down and indenting only for one-handed economists.

Contributed by Kamla Bhasin

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# The Many Worlds of Aameena Ahmed Ahuja

Kauser Khan



Aameena Ahmed Ahuja amazes one initially — a silver blonde with a silver tongue, not just one tongue but a myriad, all flowing and taking shape, strange shapes of birds and animals, abstracted exaggerated, representational figures almost. This visual interpretation becomes for Aameena, a kind of 'justujoo', or struggle. Fariduddin Attar's "Conference of the Birds" comes as a natural objective correlative to this quest. The allegory of Sufism and Islamic mysticism opens with all the birds of the world gathering together to begin a search for an ideal king (seamurgh). The theme and imagery is just right and Aameena's "conference of the birds" seems to be set to Handle's "Messiah", echoing praises of creation, whether "Alalluia" of "Jal-al-Jallal a Hoo". This is her most recent work, and a substance of its has been grabbed by Kathleen Raine, to be used for Peter Brook's production of Attar's poem.

The same internationalism of spirit pervades everything about Aameena-born of mixed parentage, Russian, English and Indian blood flows through her veins. Her house in Delhi becomes a cameo for her-Persian and

Kashmiri carpets cheek-by-jowl on the floor; Russian crystal nestling against Italian glass-ware; a big Muradabadi lamp lights up Chintz covered antique furniture from princely Indian estates; genuine China plates adorn the walls. "Art, for me, is a universal phenomenon," says Aameena, holding up a horse 'La vien pose'. "Language mentality interferes sometimes, but cannot mask the sameness of ideas" Zauq's "Jaye hava-e-shoq mein hain iss chaman se zauq Apni bala se baat-e-saba, phir kabhi chale," combines with Esenin, black on white touched with pink, the colour of life.

"But I am Indian", continues Aameena; so naturally my primary inspiration comes from the colour, sound, emotions, smells, philosophy and animals of India. Animals become expressive of aspects of human personality and human wisdom, as used in Aesop's or Knillor's fables, or as in the Panchatantra. Within the highly abstracted and representational forms, flow verses of Mirza Ghalib, Zauq, Anees, Rumi, Faiz, Iqbal, combined with Pushkin, Alexander Blok, Mayakovsky from Russia, Cervantes from Spain, La Fontaine and Rimbaud from France.

Aameena's repertoire is amazing, as is her ability to find identity of ideas transcending time and space. Human concerns, according to her, know no geographic borders, and have remained the same down the ages. Aameena's process of creation is essentially cerebral, where the mind is first activated by an embodied idea from which emanates the expressive figure. To illustrate her point, Aameena shows me a troubled deer, with head thrown back and hooves in the air. A closer look reveals Cyrillic and Shikaste in collision, echoing the love-lorn torment of Ghalib and Tutehev.

A Camberwell and Slade Arts background gives Aameena mastery over her tools, while the felicity of language is an outcome of mixed parentage and a life lived around the world. At her father's knee she learnt Arabic, Persian and Urdu. Writing with 'qalam' and 'takhti' gave her the traditional balance and control over ancient scripts like the fourteenth century Nastaliq, the twisted fauna-like khat-e-Rehani the cubic Kufic script, Khat-e-Sulus, the pathos of Shikaste-a "broken", flowing script reminiscent of bird formations in the sky.

"The letters of the alphabet," says Aameena, "give me the most perfect line, and after all, what else does an artist need, for composition, for design, for perspective, for anatomy. Handling a brush is also, in a way, doing lines in colour", "besides", she continues "I have a range of symbols to play about with. When I combine Pushkin in Cyrillic with an oriental script, it

(Continued on p.13 Col. 4)

## TRUTH TALES

Contemporary writing  
by Indian Women

Many of us, educated, living and working in big cities, leading comfortable even-tenored lives, tend to forget how the majority of Indian women live in our country today. Once in a while, we read a poignant story or see a moving film. Once in a while also comes a collection of stories like TRUTH TALES, seven stories written by women in seven major Indian languages, representing seven distinct sensibilities. The locations of these stories are spread across the Indian sub-continent, and recognisable as rural, urban, small town, and cosmopolitan. The underlying powerful theme is women. Indian women. Their un-ending battle for survival amidst the social mores of today on which "PROGRESS" has made very little dent.

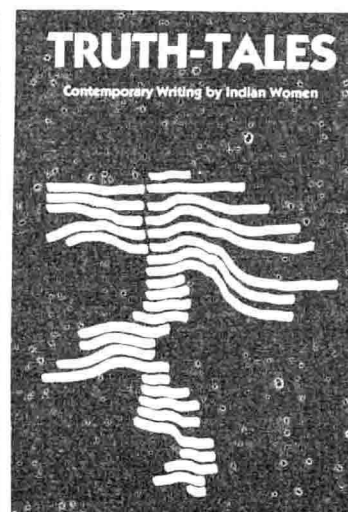
THE WET NURSE (original in Bengali) by Mahasveta Devi, translated by Ella Dutta, describes the life of a woman who is a professional mother. There are millions of women even today, in the rural areas, or with rural backgrounds living in cities, who fulfil this vital role, and who die as Jashoda does, unsung, unwept, unknown. The eternal refrain of Hindu thinking, FATE is responsible for everything that happens, reverberates throughout this story. The translation is stilted in places but the power of the theme remains unaffected by it.

SMOKE (original in Gujarati) is a short story of a modern widowed doctor daughter-in-law, living with a tradition-bound widowed mother-in-law. Packed into one brief episode is a gamut of emotions and adjustments made by the younger woman for the sake of the elder.

THE DOLLS (original in Marathi) by Suniti Apaie is easily the best of the translations (done by Dhyaneswar Nadkarni). The theme, the woman being the stronger and bread-winner for the family, the compulsions that make her go on despite her own failing health, and how despite being economically independent she is susceptible to male flattery, come through very well indeed.

TRAGEDY IN A MINOR KEY — by Mrinal Pande (original in Hindi), is seeing a typical middle class urban family, through the eyes of a young woman. The events portrayed are a little jerky, or it is the young woman herself who thinks like that.

MUNIAKKA — by Lakshmi Kannan (original in Tamil) is again a short story, describing the life of a woman servant in Tamil Nadu/Karnataka. It is a brilliant cameo outlining the several aspects of her daily life and routine, and pointing out the futility of it all.



ISMAT CHUGTAI'S TINY'S GRANNY (original in Urdu), describes a Muslim woman. She is never known by her name. She was first someone's daughter, then someone's wife, then someone's mother and finally a grandmother. The fate of a woman who has no one to look after her is brought out very vividly in this story. This is yet another beautiful translation leaving with you the flavour of the 'muhalla' scene.

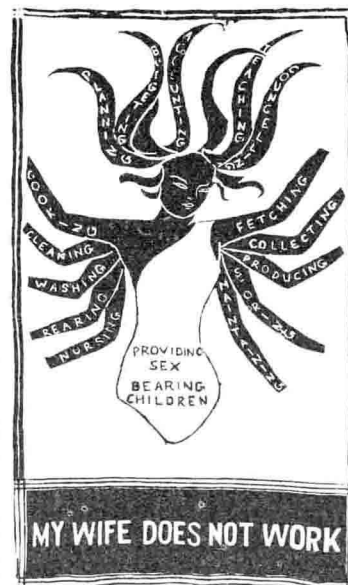
The last story, MIDNIGHT'S SOLDIERS — by Viswapriya Iyengar in English, like a surgeon's scalpel cuts open and dissects the conditions in which fisher folk live, and describes how Matilda fights a losing battle against tremendous odds.

There are a few printer's devils in the book which could have been avoided by a more careful proof reading. Nevertheless, it is a memorable trip into the lives of some Indian women, that we have all at some point of time seen, heard of or known. It is a sober reminder to every educated woman in India today of the reality of the current continuing Indian scene.

JAI KALI! More power to your elbow!

Teji Viswam

Truth Tales  
Kali for Women, 1986  
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MY WIFE DOES NOT WORK

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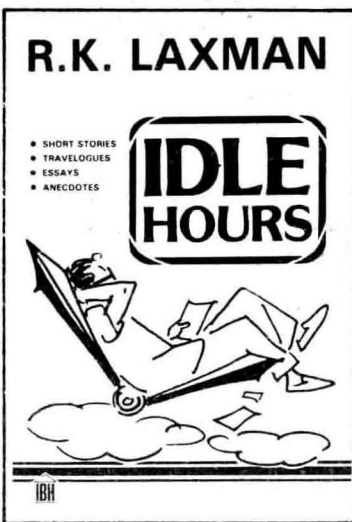


## YOU SAID IT!

R.K. Laxman is one of India's best known cartoonists. As far back as one can remember the Times of India, one remembers Laxman's column "You Said It". His amusing drawings have regaled readers with their satirical force and vivid portrait of Indian society.

Laxman's satire on politics has been directed, one supposes, against those villains in society who he believes can be laughed out of existence. He has depended upon wit and reason to score points against their vices and follies which today include genocide. Only the very literal minded would be entertained by such an unequal confrontation: "You said it! You said it!" or accept the efficacy of verbal interventions, telling hits, in today's prevailing mayhem and monstrous inhumanity. That is why the pen of Ravi Shanker of Indian Express has grown acid and manic. That is also why Mario Miranda's line curls all the more in lyrical escapism. When editors of leading newspapers have aggrandised the lampoon for their columns, robbed the caricaturist of virulence and scurrility, those of Laxman's ilk will be rendered fatuous.

Laxman's safeguard against a vocational lay-off has been his creation—the Common Man. This bespectacled, dhoti-clad, bulbous-nosed Everyman appears in every cartoon but never utters a word, though he is often



addressed. An ubiquitous over-hearer, sometimes eaves-dropper, he has an engaging, albeit peripheral, presence in the world of Laxman's cartoons. In a collection of short stories, travelogues, essays and anecdotes called *Idle Hours* (1982), Laxman writes: "For a long time I believed that I was giving readers a brief moment of joy, making them laugh at their favourite adversaries in the government, in politics..." Laxman's Common Man, however, never laughs. He has never even smiled. What distances him further from the Common Reader of Times of India is the fact that appears also to be unimpressed by the captions, perhaps from a lack of adequate knowledge of the English lan-

guage, and for the same reason would never exclaim: "Laxman, you said it!". In the same article in *Idle Hours*, Laxman tells us more about ourselves. He continues: "... But I was surprised to discover that for a whole lot of people my services as a cartoonist were of a different kind altogether and not just that of merely making them laugh! I realised that they look upon a cartoonist variously as a profound thinker, a social critic, a political scientist, a public conscience-keeper and even as some sort of a modern version of a court jester! I gathered this impression through some of the letters I get."

No wonder Laxman's Common Man has a bewildered look, but most often, a look of incomprehension. His vestigial presence in Laxman's cartoons functions as a self-reflexive criticism of them. It is a sign showing the accommodation of probable, unexpressed, maybe unthought or even uncomprehended, points of view of that majority in India who have no voice. Laxman's redemptive Common Man is a signature indicating that majority whose children will be, like them, mere survivors in the future, not the inheritors of a free and just nation.

Surjit P. Singh

*Idle Hours* by R.K. Laxman  
India Book House Pvt. Ltd.,  
1982.



Well, what is your impression, now that both of you have visited the areas which have complained of pollution?



That was a spirited, fighting speech, sir! May we know the subject, please?



Considering the size of the donation I have given to get my son a seat here, I am not going to let my boy sit in any ordinary seat!

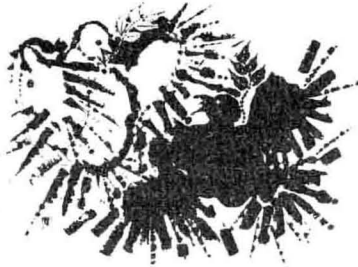


My resignation has come as a complete surprise to me!

## "And So Many More Will Die"

Ben Barka's Soweto

The Children surge forward, placards borne aloft, in the stands frenzied crowds shout their defiance, the words incomprehensible, the people's power unmistakable. On the other side the grim faced storm troopers of the South African police, weapons in hand, impersonal, expressionless, in battle camouflage, behind them massed armoured cars and trucks, lights flashing, wait for the word to charge. The boys and girls come nearer and nearer. At a given signal the front line of the storm-troopers don the gas masks which deprive them of any vestige of human quality, and as the children step over



the invisible frontier, the dehumanized robots shoot their deadly weapons. First the tear gas, and when the blinding clouds don't stop the surge, the guns, not over the heads of the youngsters, but aimed to kill. Bodies fall everywhere. There are unforgettable scenes—panic-stricken, screaming people rushing blindly in all directions, the staggering young couple, their shattered boy in their arms, the men and women literally falling from the stands to rush to save their children. The small child, tears streaming down a fear-stricken face, running away from the horror it does not understand. This is *Soweto*, the *Soweto* recreated with chilling power by Algerian film maker Ben Barka. An eerie experience—watching the film on the 10th anniversary of *Soweto*.

Ben Barka's masterpiece is a documentary of apartheid, the mindlessness, the horror, the cruelty, the courage, the degradation of white and black, the immense human tragedy. Ever present, the contrast of Johannesburg, its spacious, clean streets, its glittering neon lights with the misery and hopelessness of the black settlements sets the scene.

Apartheid breeds inhumanity, not from white to black only, but black to black, a truth which has become only too evident in the past months. Ben Barka shows us a glimpse of the total agony of the black people of South Africa. We cannot share it, but he makes us see it in ruthless terms so we cannot escape it.

For this is a ruthless film. There are characters who are

almost unbelievable until you read about South Africa. There is the man in charge of the morgue, who sells corpses to an export firm. He tells the South African white journalist in search of the truth that white corpses are seldom if ever exported because they are always claimed. "And what about the blacks?" the journalist asks. "They are never claimed" is the answer. For when a black comes from the Bantustans to Johannesburg he is lost to his family. Another almost unbelievable character is the Security Forces Captain who is told by the morgue man when he comes to dispose off corpses that what he has to sell now are not saleable because they are too mutilated.

Other characters, all finely portrayed, are vibrant with life. Matthew, whose search for his son, his brother, and his sister all vanished into the gaping hole of Johannesburg from the Bantustan, changes from the innocent, simple man he was into a bewildered, battered, angry man who has lost his faith in God. His brother Delius, a mine-worker, fearless, a born leader of men, committed to freedom, dies in an execution cell, along with Matthew's son, the boy who came to make good, but found only crime in the settlement slums, became a hired killer for the Security forces to murder the white journalist who could not keep quiet about the inhumanity and injustice he saw around him. Matthew's daughter, who comes to Johannesburg to look for her husband whom she never finds, has become a whore to earn her living and care for the only thing in life that has any meaning, her little son. We last see her running wildly through the ruins of *Soweto* calling his name, her sanity left behind in the dead. The man who has called Matthew to Johannesburg to rescue his grandson and take him back to Bantustan is perhaps the most unforgettable character of all, the little bent over priest with his monkey-like face, his unique philosophy, his compassion and his immense tolerance of humanity. He too dies in the execution cell, because, after *Soweto*, thrown into jail with the hundreds of others, he will not stop leading the prisoners in a never-ending chant of protest, which drives the black guards into uncontrollable anger. We see Matthew, eyes rimmed red with grief and suffering, whispering, in words that are dragged out of him painfully, the roll-call of the dead, saying "And so many more will die" and finally, almost with disbelief taking the name of his friend, the priest.

Harji Malik

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## A Bad Example

The ugly incidents in the Punjab Assembly during the debate on the Venkataramiah Commission Report are a sad commentary on the rapid deterioration of political behaviour in our imperilled democracy. Parliament and the State Assemblies have witnessed unfortunate unruliness and rowdiness before and many persons, in and out of the legislatures, have publicly condemned such violations of parliamentary norms by certain members since those first years when Nehru, Patel, Azad and Shastri set the high standards of Parliamentary discipline expected of the elected representatives of the people.

But not until now have we witnessed such deplorable conduct on the part of eminent legislators. Mr Parkash Singh Badal, leader of the Akali Dal for many years, erstwhile Chief Minister, a man respected the country over for his statemanship and maturity, deliberately cast aside all norms of parliamentary conduct to lead a physical assault on the Speaker in the House and, allegedly, even occupied the exalted Chair, exalted not because of any one individual, but because of its symbolic eminence in our accepted system. Some of Mr Badal's followers in the 'dissident' Akali Party are new to parliamentary procedures. One would have expected Mr Badal and Captain Amarinder Singh, a Member of Parliament for some years, to have stopped their colleagues from indulging in violent behaviour, not worthy of their responsibilities.

Instead Mr Badal actually spearheaded the assault. Captain Amarinder Singh's subsequent apology for his group's behaviour in no way excuses him from his failure to have controlled his followers. One of the legislators, Mr Lalpura, is alleged to have used obscene language during these unsavoury proceedings, which are a disgrace for the whole country.

No provocation justifies such behaviour. If the dissidents had any complaint about the Speaker's rulings, they should have resorted to the means provided to express their disapproval. Instead they have introduced the same elements of rowdiness and goondaism unfortunately connected with some elements in Akali politics, into parliamentary procedures. By flouting all conventions they have done irreparable harm to the Akali Party in the eyes of others. Equally pernicious is their behaviour to the larger Sikh community.

For let us be frank. The Sikh community today is undergoing a crisis of major dimensions, a dual crisis, both internal and external. Sikh youth particularly is passing through times of travail and trial, is in an incredible state of confusion, looking desperately for anchors to hang on to, for a basic infrastructure on which to build their future. With violence in the air, both inside and outside Punjab, with the edifice of law and order threatened by senseless, amoral terrorism, is this the example Mr Badal and his followers expect the youth, whose interests they are supposed to represent, to follow? By flouting convention and taking the law into their own hands they are setting a dangerous example. As Sikhs they should know that the Speaker's fallen turban is the symbol of the insult inflicted on the Sikh community by the Chandigarh happenings.

# The Fate of Secularism-I

Ashis Nandy

**Fellow at the Centre for Developing Societies, the writer draws attention to the various nuances of secularism in India and why the old ideology of secularism is not working.**

**I** must make it clear at the beginning that I am not a secularist. In fact, I can be called an anti-secularist. I say this with some trepidation, for, in the company in which I move, this is not a fashionable position to take. Fortunately, such is the pull of the ideology of secularism in India today that recently, when I wrote an anti-secularist manifesto, many interpreted the article to be a hidden homage to secularism. Perhaps, I shall escape this time too.

I call myself anti-secularist because I feel that the ideology of secularism has more or less exhausted its possibilities. We may now have to work with a different ideology which is already vaguely visible at the borders of Indian politics.

When I say that the present ideology and politics of secularism have exhausted themselves, I have in mind the standard English meaning of the word 'secularism'. As we know, there are two meanings of secularism current in modern and semimodern India. One of the two meanings you can easily find out if you consult any standard dictionary. But you will not find the other meaning in any proper dictionary, however hard you may try. For it is typically and distinctively India.

The first meaning becomes clear when people talk of secular trends in history or economics or when they speak of secularisation of the state. The word secularism has been in this sense in the West for at least the last three hundred years.

This secularism marks out an area in public life where religion is not admitted. One can have religion in one's private life, one can be a good Hindu or a good Muslim within one's house or one's place of worship. But when one enters public life, one is expected to leave one's faith behind. This ideology of secularism is associated with slogans like 'we are Indians first, Hindus second' or 'we are Indians first, then Sikhs'.

### Indian Meaning

As distinct from the first meaning, the Indian meaning of secularism urges one to equally value all religions. It says that the public life may or may not be kept free of religion but one must treat all religions with equal respect.

We in India have, sometimes without even admitting it, followed the Indian meaning of 'secularism', though the country's westernised intellectuals have always been uncomfortable about it. They have seen such secularism as an adulterated one and as a compromise with true secularism. Even the ultimate symbol of religious tolerance in India, Gandhi, on the few occasions when he said 'I am a secularist', had this Indian meaning in mind. This is obvious from his famous saying that those who thought that religion and politics could be kept separate, understood neither religion nor politics.

Yet, it is the first meaning of secularism which has dominated our middle class public ideology. Despite our practice of depending on the second meaning in practice, it is the first meaning which is endorsed by the process of modernisation in India. And the declared ideology of the modern Indian state, too, supports this first meaning.

**Victims of a 'Secular' Society: Gandhi and Trilokpuri, which has become Delhi's Khali (empty) Sthan (place).**



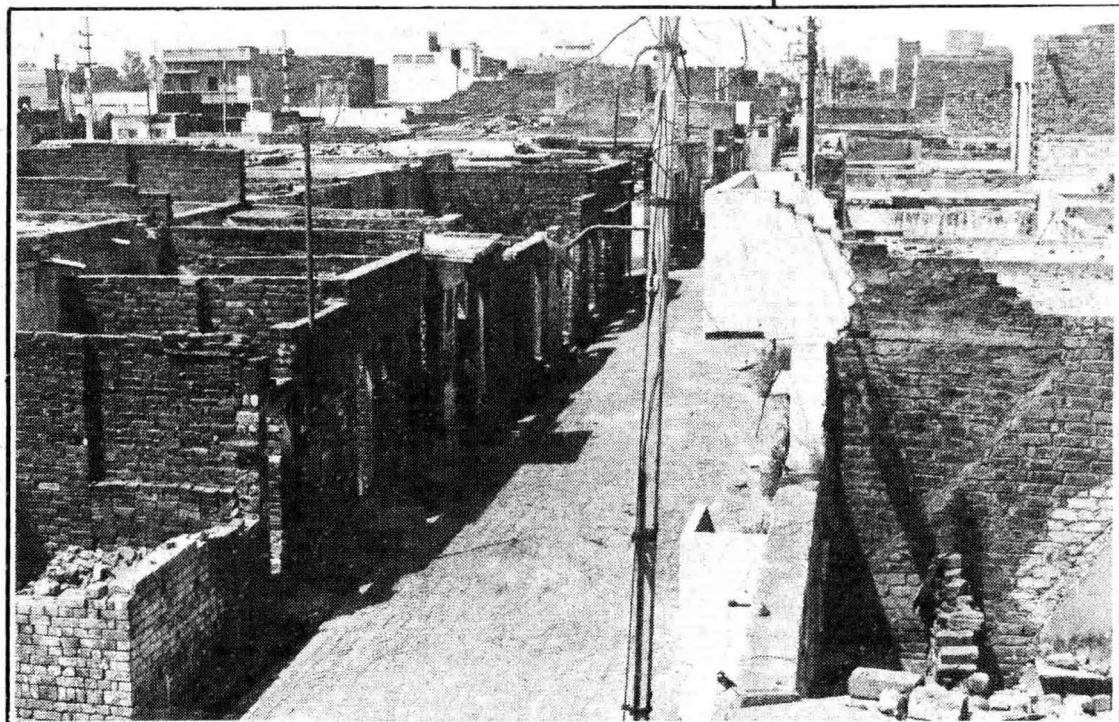
### Politics of Secularism.

Associated with this first, more western, meaning of secularism, there is a hidden political hierarchy or ladder. This hierarchy makes a four-fold classification of those in politics.

On the top of the hierarchy are those who believe neither in public, nor in private. They are supposed to be scientific and rational, and they are supposed to ultimately not only rule this society but also dominate its culture. An obvious example is Jawaharlal Nehru. Though we are now told that he believed in astrology and Tantra, Nehru always made us a little ashamed of our faiths and he convinced us, the westernised Indians, that he neither believed in private nor in public and we should model ourselves on him.

On the second rung of the ladder are those who do not

(Continued on next page)





Continued from p.8 Col. 5)

believe in public but are very devout believers in private, and our best example of the type probably is someone like Indira Gandhi. She was a true non-believer public life (she after all died in the hands of her own Sikh guards, rather than accept the advice of her security officers to change the guards) but in private she was a devout Hindu who had to go to her seventynine — or was it sixty-nine? — pilgrimages. Both Indira Gandhis were genuine and together they represented the attitude of a sizable portion of the Indian middle classes.

On the third rung are those who believe in public and do not believe in private. This may at first seem an odd category, but if I give you some examples you will understand what I mean and guess why this category includes dangerous men and women. The most obvious examples from our part of the world are Mohammed Ali Jinnah who was not much of a Muslim in private life, but yet took up the cause of Islam successfully in public, and D.V. Savarkar who was an atheist in private life but believed in Hinduism as a political ideology.

Such persons are dangerous because to them religion is a political tool, not a matter of piety. Their private non-belief only puts the secularists off-guard who never come to know how seriously the Jinnahs and the Savarkars take religion as a political instrument. On the other hand, their public faith puts the faithful off-guard because they never suspect the contempt in which their heroes hold the common run of the faithful. Often these heroes invoke the classical versions of their faiths to damn the existing ways of life associated with their faiths.

At the bottom of the hierarchy are those who believe in private as well as in public. The best and most notorious example is that of Gandhi, for he openly believed both in private as well as in public. The category has its strengths and weaknesses. You can say that exactly as it has its strength in someone like Gandhi, it has its weaknesses in someone like Ayatollah Khomeini or Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale.

At the moment I shall not go into that. All I shall add is that in India, we have been always slightly embarrassed about this modern classification in our politics, for we know that the Father of the nation does not fare very well when the classification is applied to him.

#### The Crisis of Secularism

Fortunately for Gandhi's fatherhood, this classification is not working well today. It is not working well because it has led neither to the elimination of religion from politics nor to greater religious tolerance. This is not the case only with us, this is the case with every society which has been put up to us, some time or other, as an ideal secular society.

For instance, for 150 years we have heard that one of reasons Britain dominated India and one of the reasons why we were colonised was that we were not secular, whereas Britain was.

## Deep and Moving

Dear Sir,

It is alarming to note the attitude of the 'non-Sikh' community (of which I am a member) towards the Sikh.

I happened to be flying here from Calcutta and noticed a Sikh fellow-passenger being unduly harassed at the security check. This moved me deeply enough to write a poem about it, a copy of which I attach to this.

With deep regard,

Sanjay Sharma  
C/o Sacred Heart School  
P.O. Chandmari  
Guwahati 781 003

*When Operation: Bluestar was launched: I was one of the first chosen. They wanted professionals and they wanted them loyal. They wanted men above all prejudice and what better choice than I. — for was I not a Sikh?*

*When we stormed the temple, I was among the first. The blast that blew the guts out of the saffron turbaned terrorist had me running to his aid. The offense of giving a dying man a drink was unpardonable and my allegiance was prime suspect. — for was I not a Sikh?*

*Seeing my alleged 'cosmopolitan' sympathies my*

*own side blew the legs from under me and sent me packing to base hospital while my 'buddies' were decorated for such acts of gallantry. I was court-martialled and found guilty of going 'double'. — for was I not a Sikh?*

*On buses and in parks, they eyed my amputated stump with suspicion. Maybe it's some new-fangled-suicide-bomb-bid and children steer clear of me. — for am I not a Sikh?*

*At Airport-terminals and other public places, they subject me to more detailed frisks and things more derogatory. for am I not a Sikh?*

*Today, at parties and at such 'social' gatherings I am not infrequently reminded of the turban that rests uneasy on my pate. My friends indulge in jocular banter and tell me: ... the only good Sikh, is a dead one ... I am supposed to take it all in my stride. — for am I not a Sikh?*

*My child prefers parting with his hair rather than his head. He no longer wears a turban. What if he doesn't? I want him to live — Sikh or not — for am I not human?*

— Sanjay Sharma

## "...Otherwise the border of Pakistan would have been near Delhi with J & K sliced off,"

Sir,

If we eat well in 1985-86, some credit has to go to the Sikh farmers of Punjab.

Out of the 11.45 million tonnes of rice procured for public distribution in 1984, as much as 9.85 million tonnes or 86.2 per cent has come from Punjab, out of the 9.28 million tonnes of wheat procured in 1984, five million tonnes or 50 per cent has come from Punjab.

Sikhs, more than anybody, have been responsible for the surplus food in our granaries. As a minority man, I strongly feel that Sikhs represent what is militant and dynamic in India.

Sikhs have relatively shed more blood for India than any other community. Out of the 2125 martyrs for freedom, 1557 or 75 per cent were Sikhs. Out of 2646 sent to Andamans for life

That is why we reportedly did not know how to live together, whereas Britain was a world power, perfectly integrated and fired by the spirit of nationalism. Now we find that after nearly three hundred years the Irish, the Scots and the Welsh are creating as much problems for Britain as some of the religions or regions are creating for us in India.

To be concluded.

sentence, 2147 or 80 per cent were Sikhs. Out of 127 Indians who were sent to gallows, 92 or 80 per cent were Sikhs. In Subhas Bose's army of 20000, 12000 were Sikhs and Sikhs were just 2 per cent of the total population.

A capacity to absorb scientific technology is the hallmark of a Sikh farmer. While the food-grain yield in rest of India is just 1.5 tonnes per hectare, there are districts in Punjab where the farmers have reached world standards of five tonnes per hectare and more.

Punjab leads the country in irrigated area, fertiliser consumption, electricity used and motor vehicles. It also leads in per capita bank deposit at Rs. 1637 against an all India average of Rs. 763. It is second to none in schools, newspapers, hospital beds, which are social necessities. Per capita assets in Punjab are Rs. 31,827 while for India it is Rs. 11,311.

All this has given birth to the most prosperous state of the Indian Union. Below the poverty line population in Punjab as a percentage of total population is 15.1 per cent while it is 48.1 per cent for the country as a whole. Per capita national income for Punjab for 1978-79 was Rs. 2101 while it was Rs. 1267 for the country. Availability of cereals

per day in Punjab was 2052 gms. while it was 384 grams in the country. Milk availability per year was 191 kgs. per head in Punjab, while it was only 45 kgs. for India as a whole.

Sikhs need more water for their agriculture, which they deserve. They want a separate capital which is their right. They want some adjustment in Punjab speaking districts which can be looked into.

These are the basic demands and immediate action will defuse the situation, clear the atmosphere for a settlement. It is for the present leadership to grasp the opportunity.

**The Sikh is the militant child of Hindu religion, born of necessity, shaped and tempered by history, to fight oppression. The Sikhs threw in their lot with India in 1947. Otherwise, the border of Pakistan would have been near Delhi with Jammu and Kashmir sliced off.**

The Sikh has taught us how to pull oneself out of poverty by self-help. At the same time Sikhs in Punjab have seen more devastation, disturbances through wars, since 1947 than any other community. Despite the threat of war, they have stood like a rock and made the border state the most prosperous. What can

## Protect Gurudwaras from Anti-Social Activities

No person should accept the use of religious places for anti-social purposes. If any religious place is used for anti-social purposes in any form, it is the duty of the State to intervene and stop it. The position should be viewed in the following manner: during the period of Guru Nanak Devji to Guru Gobind Singhji, religio-political activities of the Sikhs were guided by the Gurus. Wherever the Gurus were was obviously the Gurudwara. After Guru Gobind Singh's death, the Guruship passed on to the Guru Granth Sahib, so wherever the Guru Granth Sahib was kept, that place obviously was called the Gurudwara.

The practise of using these places for religious and political activities therefore continued. But it was more for convenience than for any other reason. As the Sikh Raj was established, the use of Gurudwaras for political purposes automatically stopped because authority emanated from the Rajahs/Government machinery. The public was not

required to use Gurudwaras for these purposes.

But during the British regime political activities again started from the Gurudwaras for the reasons mentioned earlier, because it was not possible to carry our anti-British activities in other places. The use of Gurudwaras for political purposes should be viewed in this historical perspective instead of it being made a major issue.

In the present context, when political activities are allowed in the open, there should be no question of using the Gurudwara for this purpose. Gurudwaras are "Guru ke Ghar", and should be used only for religious purposes particularly when an equal number of non-Sikhs visit Gurudwaras. I repeat that the use of Gurudwaras for antisocial and anti-national purposes must not be allowed. Nor should any religious place of worship be used for political purposes.

Col. H.N. Singh,  
98 Hauz Khas SFF  
New Delhi.

#### PLEA FOR AKALI UNITY

Dear Sir,

If Operation Bluestar was undertaken to crush the spirit of the Sikh Community, the limited action of the Barnala Government was to re-establish the legal control of the Sikh Community over its holiest of holy places. The two actions were quite different in their intent as well as their outcome. Yet Sardars Tohra and Badal used the latter to bring the Barnala government into disrepute and divide the Akali Party. The irony of it was that they kept declaring that their policy was neither in favour of Khalistan nor encouraging terrorism, which only showed that as such they had no policy differences with the main Akali Dal. Despite that, on June 4, 1986, on the pretext of commemorating the 2nd anniversary of Operation Bluestar they flouted the authority of the S.G.P.C. and demanded ouster of the five head priests rightly reinstated by Sardar Barnala. It is clear that Sardars Tohra and Badal are only fighting to advance their own political interests. We appeal to them not to fool their own people. It is yet time for them to shun the path of creating disunity in the Panth at this critical juncture and appeal to them once again to rejoin the main stream.

Ishar Singh  
J-11/76, Rajouri Garden  
New Delhi-110027.

be more patriotic than that?

All minorities whether Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, Jains, Buddhists, arose out of Hindus. Hindu is the mother, minorities are the children and a mother has to be more kind, understanding, loving than the children; even a prodigal son should be dear to her. An unkind, unwise mother destroys herself and her children too.

Gilbert Lobo  
Bombay



# A Champion of the Oppressed : Mahashweta Devi

Sumantha Banerji

The government which awarded the Padmashree to the Bengali novelist Mahashweta Devi this year, could have paid a better tribute to her if it had made serious efforts to put an end to the sufferings of the people among whom Mahashweta is working and about whom she is writing — the downtrodden tribal people, the depressed castes, the bonded labourers, the rural poor.

Although many of her novels have been translated into Hindi and other languages, very few outside West Bengal — or even within this state — are aware of a magazine which she runs called 'Bartika' (Candle) which carries articles, stories, poems not only about the various segments of the rural poor, but by them. By letting the downtrodden speak out in their own language and idioms, 'Bartika' has set a precedent in Bengali literature. As Mahashweta puts it, everything about folk culture can be learnt in 'Bartika' "straight from the horse's mouth."

## Experiment

In view of the relevance of such a bold and interesting experiment for the Indian cultural scene in general today, when I met Mahashweta Devi in her flat in Ballygunge Station Road one Sunday, I wanted to know about her experience in running the magazine all these years.

" 'Bartika' was started in 1953 from Baharampur in the Murshidabad district of West Bengal," she said. The editor at that time was her father, the well-known poet Manish Ghatak (known as 'Jubanashwa' in Bengali literary circles), elder brother of film-maker Ritwik Ghatak. In those days, it was a literary quarterly. "After my father's death in December 1979, I took over the magazine, and we can say from the July-September issue, 'Bartika' entered a new phase. We carried instructions about how to write, mainly aimed at those who were slightly educated and could express or put down somehow their views in writing. We posed questions to agricultural labourers, rickshaw-pullers, bonded labourers, marginal peasants, tribal teachers, ordinary villagers in such a way as to help them express in their own way an authentic picture of the social and economic reality. 'Bartika's' aim was to establish a direct contact between the grassroots people and the printed page, and we certainly have suc-



ceeded in doing it in a large measure."

Mahashweta asserted: " 'Bartika' plays a very relevant and essential role in today's cultural world. Tribal people, non-tribal rural poor, members of the depressed castes — they all write about their cultural life styles. You get to know about folk culture from the people themselves. 'Bartika' in this regard is documenting and introducing important elements of folk culture — not through academic articles embellished with footnotes by theoreticians, but through the language of those people of whose lives, culture itself is an inherent part. Rituals connected with forests and agriculture, songs, fairs and festivals — are all inseparably linked with their daily lives. It is they who write."

About their style of expression, their language, Mahashweta said: "The majority of India's common people may be unlettered or slightly educated. But they do not lack in inbred sophistication, civilized and political attitudes and are tremendously potent. For them, to go beyond the primary school level is almost a dream. But since here in Bengal villages, these people know Bengali and can read a little, and not being highly educated they are not exposed to other language thoughts, their Bengali is in sense pure Bengali. They have a powerful ability to express themselves. Their's is the authentic Bengali, the Bengali of the grassroots, of the earth. And we get the literary flavour."

'Bartika' has indeed introduced to Bengali readers some very talented writers from these sections of the population. Among them are — the late Gunadhar Singh Munda; Prahlad Bhukta and Jugal Kotal of the Lodha tribal community; Sardaprasad

Kisku and Gomostaprasad Soren from among the Santhals; the factory worker Subal Dutta; and the cycle-rickshaw pullers Ajit Bairi and Madan Dutta.

## Other Minorities

Since Mahashweta Devi had been working among and writing about minority groups like tribals, depressed castes, etc. I wondered how she felt about other minority groups in other parts of India — like the Sikhs for instance. "Since I have no direct experience about the problems of the Sikhs, I should not say anything about it," she said, adding: "There should be a healthy, democratic solution to the Punjab problem. It should not be kept unsolved any longer."

While discussing Punjab, Mahashweta sought to place it in the general perspective of the present "political map of India, prickly with numerous problems." Referring to the basic problem of poverty, she said that all the political parties from A to Z, instead of trying to solve this basic problem, were seeking to capture power and making the political scene murky.

"The condition of the tribals in particular," she said, "is the most neglected." "Whatever they had for their living — forests, rearing animals, hunting, agriculture — all had been taken away by this 'independence'. In spite of laws to protect them, because of the machinations of the 'mainstream', their lands are in the hands of others; they are deprived of drinking water, their own homes. Thanks to the politics of votes, factional conflicts are being encouraged within the tribal communities."

## Keep them Hungry

Summing up the government's policy towards tribals, Mahashweta said: "Declare an area to be Scheduled Tribes dominated and undeveloped. Only then, crores of rupees can be channelised through different projects, pundits can be invited to make schemes, but it must be seen that nothing reaches the beneficiary. Keep them hungry. For, as long as they starve, they will have to support this party or that. And, if they protest, unleash the police on them."

Mahashweta then added: "The tribals are no longer willing to remain objects of research of academic anthropologists and sociologists. They want to live like human beings on their own rights."

(Born on January 14, 1926, Mahashweta Devi published her first book 'Jhanshir Rani' in 1956. The next thirty years saw the publication of more than 100 books, including her first novel 'Nati' (1957); 'Aran-ger Adhikar' which received a Sahitya Akadami award in 1979; 'Agnigarva'; 'Sidu Kanur Dakey'; and 'Aklanta Kaurav' — to mention a few. )

# A REMEMBRANCE Gurbachan Singh Talib

In 1936 I joined Khalsa College, Amritsar as a student. It took me almost a year however before I got to know Prof. Gurbachan Singh Talib. Once I got to know him, he came to matter more in my life than any other person. During my two to three years at Amritsar I was a frequent visitor to his house and could, properly speaking, describe myself as almost a member of the family. One of the unique things about the teacher-student relationship is precisely that one gets to know a teacher as a seeker of knowledge. In the process one also gets to know him as a person. Sometimes one knows him from a distance but sometimes, as happened in my case, the teacher also becomes a friend.

For my master's degree I moved to Lahore. Prof. Talib meanwhile had also moved to Lahore. During those two years I saw a good deal of him and received considerable guidance from him in regard to my study. By virtue of his wide knowledge and intellectual grasp he loomed



very large on my mental horizon. It was one of those unique situations where his word counted more with me than that of anyone else. If he approved of something, I also approved of it. But when he disapproved of something, my views were not too dissimilar. Every student in the process of growing up goes through these various stages of development. To start with, one learns from one's teacher. In course of time as one grows up, one begins to think for oneself.

Even after I started teaching, I maintained the same close contact with Prof. Talib. He was my model as a teacher and a scholar. He provided a point of reference for so many things that I thought and did in my life. In course of time, however, our views in certain matters began to diverge. But that never came in the way of the regard and affec-

tion that I have had for him all my life.

Looking at his career, one could say that the first quarter century of his professional life, while satisfying in many ways, was also a difficult period for him. He had ability but it was not given its due and adequate recognition. In those days in particular, recognition was not in terms of academic standing but in terms of the power that one exercised. To wish to become a college principal seemed the obvious choice for any lecturer who had any ambition. Professor Talib's career as a principal was marked by various ups and downs, part of which could have been the result of the kind of person that he was. But the larger part, I am quite sure, was because he had to work with private managements who in their functioning and outlook, did not conduct their affairs with the detachment and objectivity expected of such managements. More often than not, they were factional and petty in their approach. So much of the distress, that was caused to him during those early years was directly connected with the circumstances of academic life which obtained at the time.

Perhaps those have not changed very markedly today. But his fortune took a turn for the better when he moved to Kurukshetra and subsequently to Chandigarh and then to Patiala. If his output in terms of writing is to be assessed, it would be seen that the best part of his work was done in the last one quarter of his life. Now he had more leisure and more opportunities. This in turn enabled him to concentrate on scholarly work.

While his training was in English literature, he chose to concentrate on the areas of Punjabi literature and Sikh studies. When he decided to translate the *Adi Granth* into English, it was almost a logical culmination of what his career had been leading up to. I have no doubt in my mind that, more than anything else that he has done, it is this monumental achievement of his which would be remembered best of all. In terms of quality, authenticity of interpretation and sensitivity of rendering and all such related matters, he has established a norm of performance which it would be difficult for many other people to surpass.

A man to be remembered and admired!

Amrik Singh

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# Sikhs in India: A Vision for the Future



The late Sardar Hardit Singh Malik's address to the All India Sikh Students' Federation — 1958.

Sardar H.S. Malik, as High Commissioner of India in Canada receives the sword of honour presented to the Maharatta Regiment in Calgary in 1948. The Indians and Canadians fought together in Italy and crossed the Rapido river with heavy casualties. Only the Indian troops could cross with the Canadians. Other allied troops had failed.

As I understand it the aim of the All-India Sikh Students' Federation is to promote the interests of our community generally and particularly to ensure that the Sikh religion, Sikh culture and Sikh traditions are preserved in their purest form so that the Sikh community may attain unity and strength and be able, while continuing to be a separate entity, to play a part worthy of its great traditions in the political, social and economic development of India. I can think of no cause nobler than this as I feel that our community with its great traditions and its glorious heritage has a most important role to play in the future of our country. Indeed I venture to think that the maintenance of a powerful and united Sikh community true to its great traditions, is of importance not only to the community itself and to India but in a small way, to the world itself, for the Sikh religion, the great teachings of the Sikh Gurus and our traditions are such that they have a special significance not only for ourselves but for humanity as a whole.

## India's Spiritual Tradition

We in India are today concentrating on building up the standard of living of our people by means of a comprehensive economic and social development. Obviously this is a most commendable undertaking, and indeed essential, if India is to hold a position of importance as she should among the great nations of the world. The achievements of this task will mean a great deal to India, but only if India succeeds in preserving, while attaining greater material prosperity, her own great tradition and way of life. There are many countries in the world today that have achieved very high standards of material living such as those at which we are

aiming. What do we find in those countries? The almost miraculous progress that has been achieved by science has brought with it many fears and apprehensions, and great uncertainties about what will happen to the world if the elemental forces that have now been placed in the hands of man are used for destruction rather than progress. These uncertainties and fears have bred a certain cynicism, a sort of despair, and this in its turn has led to a loosening of moral values, a tendency to live for the day and to ignore the consequences of one's actions, since one does not know what tomorrow may bring. This deterioration of the moral fibre is creating a great deal of anxiety among the thinking men and women in these great advanced countries, and there is already evident in most of them a recognition of the fact that material progress itself is not enough and that if humanity is to survive, the spiritual, side of Man must also be attended to and those qualities developed which are so essential for his true well being, faith stability of character, selflessness and sacrifice, service, and dedication.

## Rich Cultural Diversity

We in India are fortunate in that irrespective of what religion we profess, what community we belong to, what part of the country we come from we do have an old and noble tradition of what you might call spiritual as against purely materialistic values.

With the many religions and sects that we have, with our regional and linguistic areas, there is always a danger of what is rather vaguely called communalism and sectarianism. Certainly communalism and sectarianism which I would define as the aim of any one community or sect to benefit itself at the expense of others or to dominate others, must be fought

wherever it rears its ugly head. Communalism and sectarianism if allowed to flourish will surely and certainly end in the breaking up of our country and probably in the return sometime or other of some alien power to rule over us as has so frequently happened in the past.

As I have said this is a country of many races, many religions, many cultures and many languages. The different communities have their own traditions which are precious to them. Let them by all means cherish those traditions for the communities can grow only if they have their roots in their own culture and their own traditions.

This is not communalism if there is along with this effort the consciousness that they are truly an integral part of this great unity that is India and that by preserving their traditions, by strengthening themselves, they are rendering themselves fitter to serve their country and to play a worthy part in the building up of India. This then is the general background against which I would see the efforts of any particular community in order to judge whether the effort that it is making is purely communal or national. And I would appeal that none of us should have anything to do with efforts that are purely communal and, therefore, of disservice.

## What Sikhism Is

Let us for a moment consider what Sikhism is and how it fits in with the so called modern scheme of things. The entire Sikh philosophy and teachings are contained in the lives of our ten Gurus and embodied in the Guru Granth Sahib. Are you looking for a socialist ideal? Guru Nanak preached it and lived it when he preferred to eat the dry bread of the poor but honest worker to the banquet offered to him by the wealthy man who made his money dishonestly.

Are you looking for Universal Brotherhood? What does the Guru Granth Sahib say?

"Ek pita ekas ke ham barak". Then again "Nan koi bairi nahin beghana sagal sang ham ko ban ai."

The lives of our Gurus are shining examples of faith, courage, self-sacrifice, service of humanity, truth piety and devotion and always in emphatic repudiation of all hypocrisy and false values. Their spiritual strength shone out in all that they endured and achieved and in all that they have left to us for our inspiration. Are you looking for inspiration, leadership, for the indomitable spirit that laughs at odds, that knows not what defeat is, that will sacrifice all for the sake of a principle, then study the life of that truly amazing man, Guru Gobind Singh, saint, scholar, poet, warrior, leader; reformer, truly a remarkable person. If you want to taste something of his matchless faith, courage and humanity then read the account of the siege of Chamkaur Sahib and the letter he addressed to the Emperor at a time when all seemed lost. If you ever feel depressed then read just a few 'savayia' of the Tenth Guru. You will find a new life running through your veins.

So rich is our heritage. So sadly we seem to be unaware of it today:

## Importance of 'Keshas'

Let me at this point refer to a question which is at present troubling a great many of our educated young men — the question of 'keshas'.

Some of them say "How can we progress unless we 'modernise' by doing away with our keshas and beards? My answer would be "If you think that this constitutes progress and modernisation then you are making a very great mistake. Progress is not so easily achieved". Others say that we get on much better in our various professions and services if we 'modernise' in this way. I do not know if this is true — for I know that generally speaking those who cut off their hair find all kinds of excuses for it. My own faith and feelings on this question are very clear and can be put in a few words — and I speak with considerable experience for I have frequently found myself living in communities where I was the only Sikh — at school in England serving with the French and British armies during the First World War, etc., people who were worth while respected me for holding on to my way of life. There was sometimes unpleasantness but always from

unworthy people. And why should one attach any importance to opinions of such people?

I believe that there are many Sehjdhari Sikhs who are very good Sikhs and may remarks do not apply to them. I refer here to those of us who have taken the Pahul and have thereby been admitted into the glorious family of Guru Gobind Singh. Anyone of them who does away with his 'keshas' is to my mind denying Guru Gobind Singh and all that he stood for and achieved. For our 'keshas' are in very truth our link with the Guru. They are part of the uniform he gave us. Surely we can not discard that uniform and still claim that we are part of that wonderful Khalsa that Guru Gobind Singh created.

## The Meaning of 'Sawa Lakh'

We Sikhs take pride in our history. What was that but meeting and conquering difficulties? At our best we laughed at difficulties. We thrived on difficulties. We became, what we did, and what we are, to some extent even today, because we never chose the easier way. What is the significance of "Sawa Lakh"? Surely no one is foolish enough to believe that one Sikh soldier could fight successfully against 11/4 lakh soldiers. It was just a way of saying that a true Sikh is not afraid of odds, of obstacles or difficulties. That has been our strength in the past. Our survival in fact is due to that. Anyone of us who chooses the easier way — and I maintain that those who do away with their 'keshas' are in this category — ceases to be true Sikh I would like it to make it clear that in saying what I have said I do not wish to condemn or blame anyone. Those of us who take the question of 'keshas' somewhat lightly are, I believe either uninformed or very badly informed about the Sikh faith and traditions. For this the responsibility must lie with the community as a whole. The work that lies ahead of you which is nothing more or less than bringing to our people generally a true knowledge and a consciousness of what the Sikh religion is and what our traditions are in therefore noble work. A great deal has to be done for there is no doubt that among many of our people there is no real knowledge of all these things. The work of Gurmat Prachar is of the first importance, and I would like to see established an Institute for the training of people who are really competent to do this work. I look upon this, therefore, as the foundation on which other important work can be built.

*Jagatjit Industries Limited*

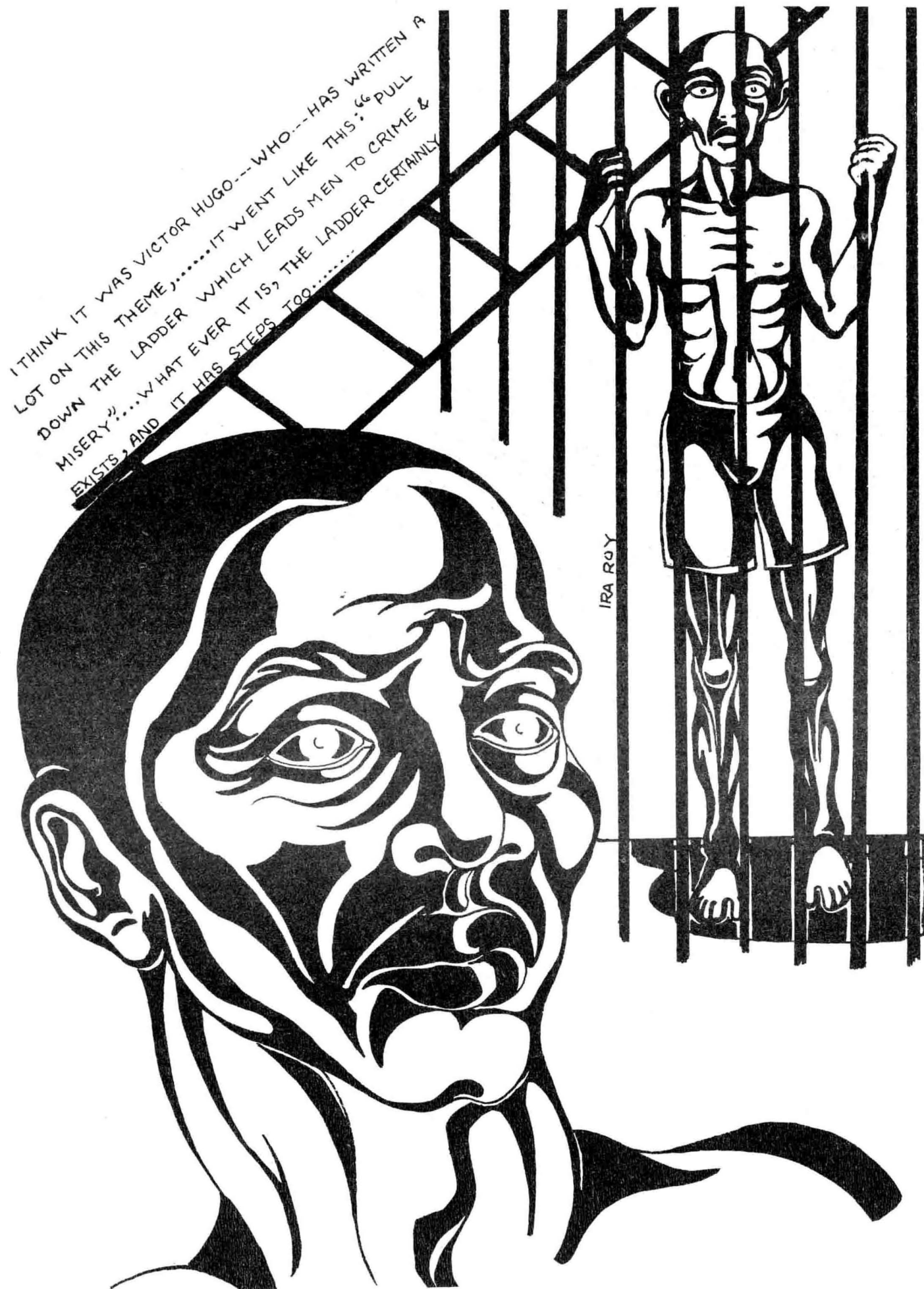
The Spirit of  
Excellence



# THREE ANNAS AND TWO PICE

Saadat Hasan Munto  
Translation: Avtar Singh Judge

Another masterpiece by Saadat Hasan Munto, one of Pakistan and the subcontinent's greatest exponents of the short story. An Urdu and Punjabi writer, this story by him is a superb exposition of the perennial theme of Crime and Punishment.



Why I committed this murder ... why I dyed my hands with human blood ... is a long story. Only a long explanation would enable you to understand it. Since the subject of your discussion is Crime and Punishment. Man and Prison, I think my opinion on them cannot be far wrong. I have been to prison myself. I agree with Mr. Munto that jail is the last place for reforming a criminal. What I say about prison, has been said so often that it sounds hollow; it is like telling a very stale joke. Indeed, is it not a cruel joke that in these days of enlightenment, thousands of prisons should still exist? ... That irons and handcuffs should still be there? ... I say this, because I have had the honour of wearing these ornaments of law."

Having said this Razvi looked at me and smiled. His thick negroid lips twitched quaintly. His small drunken eyes-the eyes of a murderer brightened.

We had been startled when he broke in on our conversation. He was sitting on the next table, sipping cream coffee. When he introduced himself, all the incidents connected with his murder-case came fresh in our memory. We suddenly remembered how cleverly he had saved his own neck and his friends' lives by turning an approver!

He had been released on the very morning of our conversation with him.

"I hope you don't mind my jumping into this conversation, Mr. Munto!" He said in a very respectful manner. You see, I am not a writer, but all the same I have something to say on the subject-of course in my own inadequate language. My name is Sadiq Razvi. I was connected with the Landa Bazar murder case."

I had read only disinterestedly about the murder, but now when Razvi introduced himself, all the headlines came back to my mind. The subject of our discussion was whether jail can reform a criminal or not. While talking about it, I too had felt that the subject had been discussed threadbare. Razvi's opinion only confirmed my own apprehensions.

Razvi fixed his gaze on me and started talking in a serious tone. "Well, Mr. Munto, what is it that drives a man to crime? ... What is crime? ... What is punishment? ... I have pondered long over these questions. I feel that every crime has its own history. It springs from the criminal's own life, and is a complex, tangled, inexplicable phenomenon. I am no master of human psychology, but I can say this much, that a man would not commit a crime if he were not literally driven to it by social circumstances."

(Continued on P.13 Col. 1)



"You are perfectly right," Nasser interposed.

Razvi ordered another cup of cream-offee and turning to Nasser said, "I do not know exactly, but what I have told you is based on my own experience. I think it was Victor Hugo — of France, or may be of some other country... well, that you know better — has written a lot on this theme, I remember a few words from his book. If I do not forget, it was your translation Mr. Munto. It went like this:

Pull down the ladder which leads men to crime and to misery.

But I often wonder what that ladder is like? How many steps does it have? Whatever it is, the ladder certainly exists, and it has steps too, but they are innumerable; to count them is not an easy task. Mr Manto, governments count men and votes and lots of other things. Why don't they count these steps? Isn't this, too, their duty? I committed a murder. How many steps of this ladder did I climb to do so? Government made me an approver for the simple reason that it had no evidence. But the question is, whom shall I ask for forgiveness? The circumstances that forced my hand have simply disappeared! Between then and now there has been an interval of one year. Do I invoke this interval, or those circumstances that grin from a distance at my helplessness?"

Razvi's talk had kept us spell bound. He spoke like a well-informed man though he did not look like one. He knew how to put across his point effectively. I would have complimented him but restrained myself for fear of interrupting him.

"I am probably talking nonsense," he said apologetically, as he sipped his coffee. "I tell you, I am constantly haunted by one man, a sweeper who was in jail, serving a year's term for stealing three annas and two pice."

"For such a petty amount?" Nasser asked in surprise.

"Yes Sir, only three annas and two pice," was Razvi's impassive reply. "And even those he never utilised — the amount is now secure in the government's treasury. Only Phagu, the sweeper, is insecure... He may again find the pangs of hunger unbearable, and steal... And he may again be caught. Perhaps the people who use him as a menial do not give him his pay, for they themselves may not be getting their's. It is a strange maze of may-bes. To tell you the truth, Mr. Munto, every thing is possible in this world... even a murder from a Razvi." Having said this he stopped talking, and seemed lost in thought "You were telling-us about Phagu," Nasser tried to draw him out.

Razvi wiped the coffee off his bushy moustache with a handkerchief. "Well, Phagu, inspite of being a thief according to the law, he was an honest man, By God, I have not seen such an honest man all my life! That he stole three annas and two pice was correct. He confessed it in the court and refused to put up any defence for himself. All he said was, 'I had to steal because I had not touched a morsel for two days. I had to thrust my hand into Karim's pocket. He

owed me five rupees, two month's pay. I do not blame him, for even he had not realized the fruits of his labour from his customers. Phagu even told the court: 'This is not the first time I have done such a thing. Once I stole ten rupees from a madam's purse. Then I stole a silver toy from the Deputy's house. I was desperate: my child was down with pneumonia and the doctor demanded a fee. Sir, I tell you that I am not a thief. Circumstances made me steal, and circumstances got me caught. Were it not for circumstances, should, so many criminals, much bigger and more dangerous than I am, be still at large? Sir, my wife and child are dead, only my hunger lives on. If somehow this could be eliminated... all the struggle would be over. Sir, forgive me, I pray for mercy'. But the judge awarded him a year's rigorous imprisonment for being a confirmed and a self-confessed thief."

Razvi spoke without emotion. The flow of his words was natural and effortless. I sat quietly listening, smoking one cigarette after another.

Nasser coaxed him again, "What was it that you were telling us about Phagu's honesty?"

"Hu..." Razvi lighted a bidi, "I don't know what honesty is in the eyes of law. I only know this, that I was honest when I committed murder. I think Phagu was honest when he stole those three annas and two pice. What I cannot understand is, why people associate honesty with only the good things. I have come to believe that goodness and badness are relative terms. One man's meat is another's poison. What is held good in one society is stigmatised in other... With the Muslims, to allow hair to grow under the armpits is a sin; with the Sikhs it is just the contrary. If growing hair under the armpits is a sin, then God would certainly punish the Sikhs. If he does really exist, it is my earnest prayer to him that he abolish all man-made laws and destroy all the prisons that men have raised, and from his own establishment in the Heavens distribute even-handed justice, so that we may have at least the satisfaction that it is God that judges us."

I was moved by Razvi's words. Even though addressing us, he seemed to be talking to himself.

His bidi had gone off. He tried to light it many times but couldn't. Discarding it he addressed me, "Mr. Munto, I will remember Phagu all my life. I know you will call me a sentimental fool when I tell you all about him. But sentimentality has nothing to do with it, for he was not a friend. And yet, he was a friend for he surely proved to be one."

Razvi pulled out another bidi out of his pocket, it was all crumpled. I offered him a cigarette.

"Mr. Manto, I shouldn't have talked all this nonsense knowing that you are such a..."

I did not allow him to finish, "For the time being I am Saadat Hasan, and not Munto, the great writer, as you were perhaps going to say. Please continue Mr. Razvi. I am all ears."

Razvi smiled, "This is very kind of you," and turning to

Nasser said "What was I saying?"

"Hm..." He lighted a cigarette and said, Mr. Manto, Phagu was a confirmed thief in the eyes of law. Once he had stolen eight annas for bidis, and had broken an ankle trying to scale a wall, to escape. He was under treatment for one year. But when my friend Jarji, a co-accused would send me a bundle of twenty bidis through him, he would bring them safely to me, using all caution to escape being detected. You know approvers are kept under strict vigilance. Jarji had befriended Phagu to do all sorts of jobs for me, he was a menial but had a very clean heart. In the beginning when he brought bidis from Jarji, I thought the rascal must have stolen some. However, I was grossly mistaken. He was honest to the tips of his fingers; for bidis he had fractured his ankle, but in jail, where tobacco was rare, he handed them all over to me, as if it was a sacred trust. I remember he would sometimes beg for just one bidi, and that too, hesitatingly. And can you imagine how mean a man can be? I would give him only one."

Razvi shook his head as if he was cursing himself. "I was kept under strict vigilance. This generally is the case with all approvers. Jarji, as compared to me, enjoyed much greater freedom. He had bribed his way to many amenities. He could get clothes, soap-cakes and bidis, and even money to offer bribes in the jail. Those were the last days of Phagu's term in the prison. I congratulated him for his forthcoming release when he came to me with the last bundle of bidis. He was not happy at the prospect of leaving the jail. If I don't forget, his last words were, 'Babuji, I am sure I will come back to this place. For a hungry man, the act of stealing is as normal as that of eating. He was obviously moved, and added, 'you have been so kind to me Babuji, you gave me bidis to smoke. It is my earnest prayer that all your friends are acquitted, Jarji Babu has great regard for you'."

"And he was imprisoned for stealing three annas and two pice!" Nasser repeated, if only to confirm the fact.

Razvi had another sip of coffee, and said coldly, "Yes, for three annas and two pice; and even those are safe in the treasury. I wonder whose hunger they will satisfy."

He had another sip, and this time addressing me said, "Mr. Manto, there was only a day left for his release. I was in desperate need of ten rupees. To cut a long story short I wanted to bribe a sentry. Somehow I procured a pen and a paper and managed to send a chit to Jarji through Phagu. Phagu, incidentally was illiterate. In the evening he handed me a chit from Jarji. Enclosed in it was a ten-rupee currency note, the chit read:

"Dear Razvi, I am sending you ten rupees through a confirmed thief. I only pray that they reach you; for the man is leaving jail tomorrow. 'As I went through the chit, a smile broke on my lips. For stealing three annas and two pice he had served one lingering year in the prison..."

Abruptly Razvi stood up and left us without a word.

## The Many Worlds of Ameena Ahmed Ahuja

(Continued from p.6 Col. 3)

is as if the symbols and spaces in between, become like musical notes which together form a concerto or a symphony." To illustrate this beautiful simile she holds up a power-packed, galloping horse in Khat-e-Rehani and Shikaste, expression of the sentiment.

"The horse of life is running uncontrollable, I have neither stirrups nor reins."

On being questioned about the predominant use of black and white, Ameena evokes Abul Fazal, who says in Ain-e-Akbari: "at a superficial glance, the letter of calligraphy might look like a sooty figure, but it has all the gradations of light and shade, enhanced by the whiteness of the background." Almost the same theory that you might find in the Chinese and Japanese approach to calligraphy! To being the internationalism round a full cycle, Ameena quotes a Sanskrit shloka "Dvanam Pashet, Rangam Shunaya Tam" (Sound must be seen, and colour heard).



A troubled deer, with head thrown back and hooves in the air, on closer looks reveals Cyrillic and shikaste in collision. (Ghalib and Tutchev)

Touches of bronze, gold and silver do sometimes relieve the otherwise stark black and white paintings. Other colours, too, find echoes here and there, as the pink in the Esenin and Zauq horse. Shiraz blue has a particular connotation, just as the Khurja-blue, or the Esenin blue to the Russians. That is perhaps why her Esenin Series, depicting his Persian cycle, were so widely appreciated in Russia. "Esenin is all blue in this period" says Ameena, pointing towards the walls of the room where the paintings depicting his "Persian Motives", are displayed. Working on canvas-covered board, Ameena uses a variety of elements like calligraphy, miniatures worked in oil, collages of porcelain and ceramics, glass, zandozi-all combining to form compositions of breath-taking beauty and sensual appeal.

Talking about this variation

of tools from the old fashioned read-pens of Jamma Masjid to the sophisticated conglomerations in the Esenin series, Ameena says "Your intuition guides you", refusing to expand further. And who are we to question the intuition of the an artistic temperament?

The same intuition leads Ameena to sometimes use human figures, as in the Dancers, or Hafiz's crucifixion. Iqbal's famous lines:

"Bagh-e-Bshisht se mujhe hukum-e-safar diya tha kyon Kare jahan danaz har, ab mera inteza kar." are embodied in the figures of Aadum Aur Hava (Adam and Eve). Again, who are we to question the creative process?

Calligraphy and religion have always grown in conjugation, nurturing each other. But Ameena has modified it to the rendering of secular poetry—a major point of departure indeed from contemporary calligraphists like Sadquin. Every artist's life, according to her is a quest for the perfect medium of expression—these figures seething with life and sound seem to be her's. She took up this form because "it seemed right and it hasn't been done before." The universality of its appeal can be judged by the acclaim she has found abroad—in Moscow, London, Tokyo, New York and Caracas her work has been widely appreciated. One of her most memorable moments is of her exhibition of some 80 works at the Museum of Oriental Arts, Moscow. The late Faiz Ahmed Faiz came to the opening and spontaneously versified:

"Gham be dil, Shukr be lab, Masto Ghazal Khem chalie Aur jab talak saath tere, Umai ghumrezan chalie."

(With a song on your lips, walk non-chalantly on/ Even when there is sadness in the heart, Keep up the pace as long as life keeps up with you).

This dedication was especially important to her because she has always found a kinship with Faiz—his internationalism of spirit, and world view.

The time seems to be right to take leave of Ameena Ahmed Ahuja, as she stands in her salon, almost oblivious of my presence now.

Immersed in thought she complements her exotic surroundings a colourful figure covered with turquoises as large as pigeon's eggs. The warmth of her personality combines with typical Muslim 'adab' to make her an irresistibly charming person. The most powerful image that I carry away with me is of the deep husky voice reiterating the same verses that are embodied in the paintings she holds up one by one. It was indeed an audio-visual treat! ●

### SHOP AT



10 Regal Building, New Delhi-110001, INDIA



# World Environment Day and Chipko

Ritu Menon

Dusk in the Garhwal Himalaya settled slowly, like a soft blue shadow on the 13 odd villages of Saklana valley, 50 kms. north-east of Mussoorie, and source of the river Song. Gradually, the palette changed colour, the liquid green and gold of late afternoon awash now with misty blues and purples, the occasional snow-capped peak like a white flare against the deepening sky. As we wound down the hillside, the

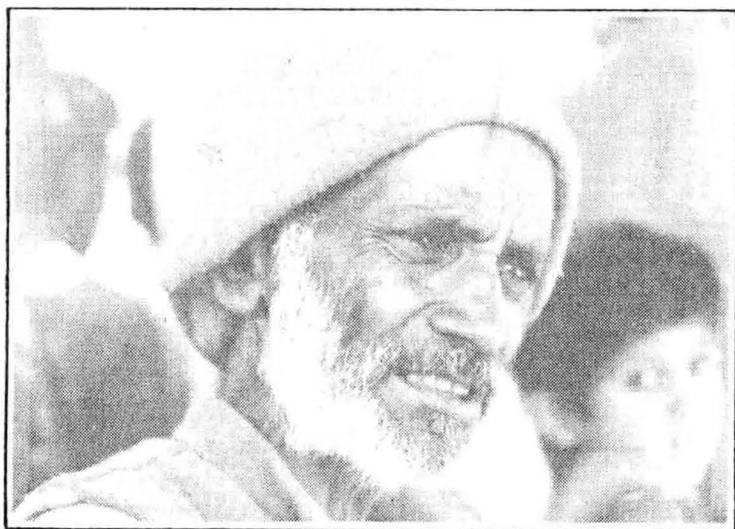
has desertified the best Basmati-growing land in the country — the reforested hills of Saklana are a reminder of how the determination of individuals and groups can reverse the imminent ecological crises of the Himalaya. Here, inspired by Sunderlal Bahuguna and Visweswar Datt Saklani, in particular, villagers have replanted forests with regenerative oak trees, in clear recognition of the ecological value of broad-leaved,

practical wisdom knew this scientific truth.

## Resistance Movements

Villagers' destinies — had, in fact, been decided much earlier, in 1927, when the British passed the Forest Act, declaring forests as reserved areas, denying villagers their traditional rights to forest produce, and appropriating both the management and exploitation of forests. (Ship-building for the British Royal Navy and sleepers for the expanding railway network in India created an extraordinary force for destruction.) Chipko's true history begins with the resistance movements of that time, responding to Gandhi's call for non-violent *satyagraha*, and it was the sustained resistance by these villagers to exploitative forest management that led to the passing of the Forest Protection Act in 1980, with its 15-year ban on commercial green felling in the Himalaya.

Sudeshia Devi, among the more militant of the women says succinctly: "Tum chahe padyatra karo, chahe political yatra karo. Main roz bojh yatra karti hum." Indeed, the impact of ecologically unsound development has been greatest on women, and they are, in large measure, responsible for the shift in the



Visweswar Datt Saklani, from whom the U.P. Forest Deptt. has extracted fines for replanting on "their" land! "My slogan", he says, is "plant a tree at birth, marriage and death".

brilliant reds and yellows and greens of the women's saris absorbed the last of the light, just as in one's ears the dying strains of Shailaniji's songs and slogans echoed still: *Aaj Himalaya jage ga, kroor kulhara bhagega / Aaj Himalaya ki lalkar, ban par gaon ka adhikar...*

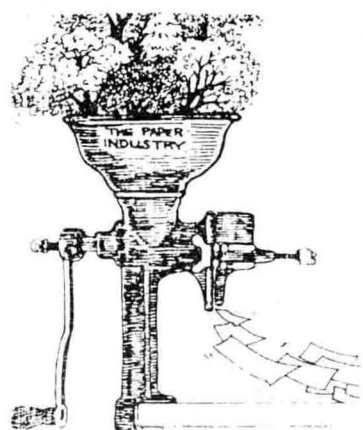
June 5, World Environment Day, was celebrated in Saklana this year, in a significant departure from the ritual planting of saplings by assorted VIPs, schoolchildren and politicians that normally mark the day. Organised by the Garhwal chapter of INTACH (the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage) it was the culmination of a 3 day meeting of roughly 60 Chipko activists, prime movers in the campaign to save the Himalaya through afforestation and the stabilisation of its hydrological cycle: the Himalaya, it is to be remembered, are the source of water for one-third the country.

## Chipko Participants

Under the shade of an aged, leafy tree in the courtyard of a newly-constructed technical college in Saklana, gathered the diverse participants of the Chipko *andolan*: Sunderlal Bahuguna Dhoom Singh Negi, Ghanshyam, Raturi (Shailani) the Bard of Chipko, Visweswar Datt Saklani, Sudeshia Devi, men and women who walked from neighbouring Uttarakashi and Tehri, in a minor replay of the many *padyatras* they had undertaken during Chipko's history. The choice of Saklana couldn't have been more appropriate. In the heavily denuded and degraded mountainsides of Doon and Tehri Garhwal — sustained limestone quarrying, for example,

humus-producing and water-generating species.

Forty years ago Mira behn, after touring the hill catchment of the Bhagirathi, had drawn the country's attention to the utility of oak forests and urged their protection in order to save the country from devastating floods. She observed that their main cause was not merely deforestation but the conversion of oak forests into pine forests for commercial benefit. Bahuguna says: "Conifers have disastrous effects on soil and water. Mira-behn's timely warning was dismissed as madness by those deciding the destinies of people from the air-conditioned chambers of Lucknow and New Delhi, but the villagers with their



dynamics of the Chipko movement to an ecologically sustainable use of resources. The Himalaya's primary product is water; the meeting at Saklana centred around the integrated water crisis in this region, (one jerry-can of water here, 100 ft. above the water-bed, sells for Rs 30!) and the recognition that the ecological development of the Himalaya lies in the conservation of its water. Forest management is thus crucial and reforestation must go hand in hand with solving the water crisis, and pursuing an enlightened agricultural policy.

As we climbed up the hill to the forest replanted by the villagers (100 hectares in Saklana are now regenerated) the valley resounded with their slogans: *Jangal ke hain kya upkar, Mitti, pani aur bayar / Mitti, pani aur bayar Ye hain jivan ke adhar*. Each outsider planted wild apricot on this hill, a moving and symbolic gesture on World Environment Day, in sincere appreciation of the fact that planning for the Himalaya must come from the grass-roots up, and that *Sukh se agar jeena chaho, har waqt chahe per lagao*.



## Fear and Migration Syndrome in the Punjabi Press

### UNHELPFUL OFFICIALS

The deputy leader of the Congress-I Vidyarthi Party, Shri Mohanlal, who also happened to be the president of the Sanatan Dharam Sabha, revealed after a tour of Dist. Gurdaspur that one third of the minority population in Fateh Garh Churian had already migrated. The rest were trying to arrange for trucks to load their household goods, but the local officials were not allowing them to move out. Many people had been killed and many others were receiving threatening letters. Sri Mohanlal expressed surprise at the cancellation of the proposed visit of police chief Rebeiro to this area. Such action created a sense of insecurity in the local populace. That was why people there were eager to move to the big cities or areas outside Punjab.

(June 17; Daily Ajit)

### VILLAGE SECURITY COMMITTEES

Plans were afoot to form village security committees in all the 1200 villages of Dist. Amritsar. This was revealed by Ramesh Inder Singh, Deputy Commissioner, Amritsar. These committees would keep a watch over the movement of intruders and undesirable elements in the area and form a security task force of 5-7 people after thorough scrutiny. The sector Commander will be their overall incharge. Along with this the policy of granting arms licenses would be liberalised so that law-abiding citizens were prepared for self-defence.

(June 20; Ajit Weekly)

Addressing a party conference at village Sidhwan (12 K.M. from Gurdaspur), Chief Minister S.S. Barnala said that the number of people migrating from Punjab was not big. Moreover the Government was not sparing any efforts to bring back the people who have already migrated. He said that the exodus of people from Punjab could be dangerous not only for Punjab but also for the whole country.

(June 14; Punjabi Tribune)

The deputy leader of the legislative wing of the Congress I, Shri Mohanlal, said that if the situation in Punjab was not brought under control soon, the problem of the exodus of the minority community would assume dangerous proportions.

He said that the Congress-I support to the Barnala Government was extended on the condition that it should provide security to the minority community and stop killings of innocent people.

(June 17; Punjabi Tribune)

The truth is that the exodus of Hindus from some areas of Amritsar and Gurdaspur districts has assumed dangerous proportions. If some solid steps are not taken to prevent more migration out of these areas, we may have a situation on our hands which could be very much like the partition days. So far all steps taken in this direction have proved futile. Most of the police force either helps the extremists or is scared of them. An exodus of Sikhs from other states to Punjab has also started. There is still time to check this phenomenon. Instead of paper work, the police force should be completely reorganised and patriotic elements be trained in the use of arms.

(June 18; Hind Samachar)  
(Courtesy Naya Zamana).

Talking at a press conference in Chandigarh, Shri Chandra Shekhar, President of the Janata Party, said that the exodus of Hindus from Punjab is causing grave anxiety. The Barnala government had completely failed to control the situation. Both the Centre and the state were responsible for this crisis and their contribution to tackle it was not more than zero.

(June 13; Hind Samachar)

A four-member investigation Committee appointed by the Punjab Pradesh Congress-I to go into the reasons of a sudden spurt in terrorist activities around Tarn Taran and the consequent exodus of the minority community has come to the conclusion that the extremists want to clear this area of all those opposing their designs and make it safe for pro-Khalistan elements.

(June 13; Hind Samachar)

### POLICE REPRESSION

The people of Dhariwal (Dist. Gurdaspur) had started migrating out of Punjab because of the fear of extremists and harassment by the local police, said Sri B.S. Azad, the Secretary of the Bharat Lalit Kala Society of Punjab. He stated that while the police was scared to go after the real culprits, innocent people were tortured by it for no fault of their's. Revealing that he belonged to the schedule caste, he recounted a recent episode. The police picked up a member of their family. When people gathered and protested, the police they released him, but not before beating him mercilessly. Now people are leaving the place because of the scare created by the police.

(June 10; Daily Ajit)



## Centre Bungles Over Chandigarh

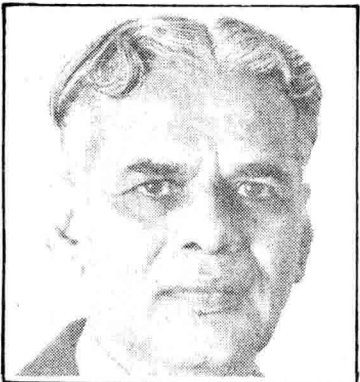
(Continued from p.1 Col. 5)

the Barnala faction's need to look over its shoulder at the Badal-Tohra combination, the Punjab Government agreed to transfer 45,000 acres of Hindi-speaking territory and also acceded in principle to transfer an additional 25,000 acres to Haryana (as awarded by the Venkataramiah Commission). Punjab maintained that Chandigarh should be transferred to it by June 21 and Haryana be persuaded in the national interest to accept a delayed date for receiving the contentious 25,000 acres.

### Government, Opposition, Press Pressure

Punjab's selective acceptance of the Venkataramiah Award however attracted a barrage of criticism, accompanied by intimidation and pressure to force it to transfer all 70,000 acres right away 'in the national interest' even though time was required to identify the extra 25,000 Hindi-speaking acres.

The reaction in Punjab to this pressure was marked by exasperation that the burden of the national interest inevitably falls on its shoulders. Reports



Justice Venkataramiah

from Punjab also suggested widespread apprehension that the Centre itself was more concerned about the Congress-I's future in Haryana than the national interest. What is more, the opposition and much of the press appeared to follow their 'Master's Voice'.

### The Desai Fiasco.

On top of all this came the Desai fiasco. Appointed as a 'higher judicial authority', the present Chairman of the Law Commission, Justice D.A. Desai, was asked to take over the task left half-done by Justices Mathew and Venkataramiah. He was asked to perform a twelve-hour miracle if not a central government rope trick to identify the 70,000 acres which could be transferred to Haryana on



Justice Desai

June 21. His appointment announced only on Friday 20 June. It is not clear what kind of a 'higher judicial' process the Desai Authority could have initiated in the time available to it without arousing suspicion that the Centre's intentions were less than trustworthy.

### Suspensions Confirmed

The suspicions were confirmed when it came to be known that Justice Desai was not to be guided by the triple principles of linguistic affinity, village as a unit and contiguity while formulating his recommendation. In other words he was empowered to transfer even Punjabi-speaking villages to Haryana-much against the intent and letter of the Accord. To make matters worse, the Desai Authority was asked to devise its own procedures. Sardar Barnala rightly protested against the travesty of fair dealing. The Centre then amended (on Friday 20 June) Desai's terms of reference to allow him to keep in view the terms mentioned in para 7.2 of the Memorandum of Settlement. By adding this perplexing para and thus seeking to reopen the terms of the Accord, the Centre was hardly making amends; it was in fact allowing itself to become a party to a back-door conspiracy to re-open the Abohar-Fazilka question, which it was believed had been put to rest by Justice Mathew. Or so Punjab believed.

And so it was that Punjab rejected the Desai panel. The curtain has thus still not come down on the Chandigarh drama. Even though much of the nation's public opinion outlets chose not to see it that way, the past fortnight's events made it clear that along with the terrorist factor, there is also the factor of the credibility of the Government of India that tends to come in the way of breaking through the impasse in Punjab.

## Health for All ...

(Continued from p.16 Col. 3)

in collusion with some WHO bureaucrats succeeded in sabotaging any move in that direction. Its stakes are high: a \$100 billion (Rs. 120,000 crores) a year world market, about a fifth of it landed in the Third World.

Add to that the freedom that exists for it in most Third World countries to make wild claims about the efficacy of drugs — till recently, a British MNC shamelessly advertised vitamin C as a

cure for smoking in some African countries — suppress information on the adverse reactions, side-effects and contra-indications in respect of its products, and, above all, bribe the medical community with free samples, gifts and junkets so as to secure its compliance in the industry's high-pressure and unethical marketing practices.

And you have the picture of a multi-billion-dollar business prospering at the cost of the health of the people, unfettered by international restrictions and under no pressure to conform to

the rational frameworks of drug therapy that are becoming increasingly current in some First World countries and even in a few Third World ones, such as Bangladesh, Mozambique and Iran.

### Essential Drugs; Bangladesh Example

Such frameworks are, typically speaking, premised upon the establishment of a list of essential drugs and include a regime of tight social control on the production, quality assurance and promotion of drugs.

## Bangladesh - Drug Policy

Consistent with the declared guidelines of Government to provide basic needs of life to the majority of the people through austerity, and to improve the economy of the country and prevent wastage of foreign exchange, the production and/or importation of unnecessary drugs or drugs of marginal value have to be stopped.

Almost any drug may produce unwanted or adverse reactions. The combination of two or more active ingredients not only makes the product costlier, it also increases the possibility of adverse reaction without increasing the efficacy over a single ingredient product. Hence, as a general rule, combinations of similar or dissimilar drugs will be prohibited.

One of the greatest sources of drainage of the country's financial resources is the irresponsible prescribing and marketing and inappropriate self-use of vitamins. Another great wastage of meagre resource is cough mixtures, gripe water, alkali preparations, and digestive enzymes which are of little or no therapeutic value.

It is unanimously decided that the following criteria will serve as the guidelines in evaluating all the registered/licensed pharmaceutical products manufactured and/or imported in Bangladesh.

- The combination of an antibiotic with another antibiotic or antibiotics with corticosteroids or other active substances will be prohibited.

Antibiotics harmful to children (eg Tetracycline) will not be allowed to be manufactured in liquid form.

- The combination of analgesics in any form is not allowed as there is no therapeutic advantage and it only increases toxicity, especially in the case of kidney damage. The combination of analgesics with iron, vitamins or alcohol is also not allowed.

- The use of codeine in any combination form is not allowed as it causes addiction.

iv. In general, no combination drugs will be used unless there is absolutely no alternative single drug available for treatment or if no alternative single drug is cost effective for the purpose.

- Vitamins should be prepared as single ingredient products with the exception of B complex. Members of vitamin B complex with the

exception of B 12 may be combined into one product. B 12 always has to be produced as a single ingredient injectable product. Other members of B complex may also be produced as single ingredient products (eg B1, B2, B6 etc.). Vitamins will not be allowed to be combined with any other ingredient such as minerals, glycerophosphate, etc. It will be allowed to produce vitamins in tablets, capsules and injectable form only.

No liquid forms will be permitted because of wastage of financial resources and the tremendous misuse involved.

- No cough mixtures, throat lozenges, gripe water, alkalis, etc. will be allowed to be manufactured or imported as these are of little therapeutic value and amount to great wastage of our meagre resources.

- The sale of tonics, enzyme mixtures/preparations and so-called restorative products flourish on consumer ignorance. Most are habit-forming and with the exception of pancreatin and lactase these are of no therapeutic value. Henceforth local manufacture of importation of such products will be discontinued.

However, pancreatin and lactase will be allowed to be manufactured and/or imported as single ingredient products.

- Some drugs are being manufactured with only a slight difference in composition from another product but having similar action. This only confuses both patients and doctors. This will not be allowed.

- Products of doubtful, little or no therapeutic value and rather sometimes harmful, are subject to misuse and will be banned.

- All prescription chemicals and galenic preparations not included in the latest edition of British Pharmacopoeia or British Pharmaceutical Codex will be prohibited.

- Certain drugs, in spite of known serious side-effects and possibility of misuse, having favourable risk-benefit ratio may be allowed to be produced in limited quantity for restricted use. These will be prescribed by specialists only.

- The same or close substitutes of a drug which is being produced in the country will not be allowed to be

imported, as a measure of protection for the local industry. However, if local production is far short of needs, this condition may be relaxed.

- A basic pharmaceutical raw material which is locally manufactured will be given protection by disallowing it or its substitute to be imported if sufficient quantity is available in the country.

- The role of multinationals in providing medicines for this country is acknowledged with appreciation. In view of the calibre of machinery and technical know-how which lies in their hands for producing important and innovative drugs for the country, the task of producing antacids and vitamins will lie solely with the National Companies, leaving the Multinationals free to concentrate their efforts and resources on those items not so easily produced by smaller National Companies. Multinationals will, however, be allowed to produce injectable vitamins as single ingredient products.

- No foreign brands will be allowed to be manufactured under license in any factory in Bangladesh as this leads to unnecessary high prices and payment of royalties. In the light of this policy, all existing licensing agreements should be reviewed.

- No Multinational Company without their own factory in Bangladesh will be allowed to market their products after manufacturing them in another factory in Bangladesh on toll basis.

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## "Health For All" in Reagan's Shadow

### MNC Victory at WHO Meeting

By Salam Murad  
Our special correspondent in Geneva

If you really want to see an internationally bully, a Super Rambo, in action, come to Geneva," a very senior official of GATT (General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs) told me.

He was referring to the U.S. role in specialised United Nations agencies such as GATT, UNCTAD (U.N. Conference on Trade and Development), ILO (International Labour Organisation) and WHO (World Health Organisation). That role under Ronald Reagan's second term is, to put it simply, that of the obstructor, the wrecker, the destroyer.

Reagan's America, convinced that these U.N. agencies have turned into hotbeds of subversive political activity directed against the Free World, is out to weaken, paralyse and destroy them. In less than five years it has succeeded in undoing a good deal that was achieved through painstaking efforts made over whole decades.

This is nowhere truer than of WHO, which the Americans — and the pharmaceuticals, tobacco and baby food multinationals — regard as a dangerous organisation out to restrict the "free play of market forces", and to promote such causes as "Health for All by 2000 AD", "rational use of drugs" and the international code on the marketing of breastmilk substitutes and baby foods.

From a Third World viewpoint, these are some of the best things that have happened (even if they often remain mere paper programmes and slogans) after the WHO campaigns of the fifties against TB and small-pox.

For the Reaganites and the MNCs, they are totally negative developments, even acts of war waged by "Mad Dogs" against sacred commercial interests, and hence appropriate targets of attack.

At the thirtieth World Health Assembly held in Geneva between May 5 and 16, the attack was multi-pronged. *First*, cut the U.S. contribution to WHO — i.e. put it on notice. *Second*, circulate a venomous report by Reagan's brains trust, the ultra-rightwing Heritage Foundation, on WHO just before the assembly and, through it, deliver the threat to walk out of the organisation *a la UNESCO*. *Third*, attempt to block and sabotage all resolutions that seek to extend a pro-Third World, anti-MNC, anti-commercial orientation on health and drugs policy. *Fourth*, raise contentious issues such as Libya's credentials so as to detract attention from the critical questions on the agenda. *Fifth*, terrorise the WHO bureaucracy and browbeat it into toning down the content of its more important resolutions. And, *finally*, launch a frontal attack on the thrust of the main arguments for rational health policies, social control of drugs and their stricter regulation for safety, for banning the advertising and promotion of unnecessary and irrational breastmilk substitutes and of tobacco smoking.

The unfortunate thing, of course, is that the combined American-multinational attack did succeed even if to a limited extent. And this it did only because the WHO bureaucracy and several Third World governments, including India's crumbled under the joint offensive.

Thus, all hopes that the World Health Assembly would move forward on the vital issue of rational drug therapy were shattered.

#### Revised Drug Strategy

Such hopes were not unfounded. Many of them derived from the Assembly ses-

sion of 1984 and a conference of experts held in Nairobi last year at the recommendation of the Assembly. The principal recommendations of the Nairobi meeting were toned down, distorted or simply ignored in the official report that was presented in Geneva in May.

The report has been described as an awkward compromise between the perspective for the rational use of drugs put forward by voluntary health action and consumer groups and independent pharmacologists and doctors, on the one hand, and the interests of the drug companies and conservative governments, on the other — a compromise reached at the expense of the former.

At any rate, the report prepared the ground for the assembly to adopt what was termed the "revised drug strategy" — without any meaningful debate whatsoever. It is significant that this revised strategy basically shifts the responsibility for the rational use of drugs to weak or inefficient national drug regulatory authorities and retreats from the declared goal (1968) of working towards a code of ethics for the promotion and marketing of drugs.

Such a code, along the lines of the breastmilk substitutes and babyfood code, could at least have had the effect of setting definite ethical marketing norms, putting pressure on the big drug companies not to promote harmful or irrational products, and of making it difficult for national regulatory authorities to turn a blind eye to malpractices in the drug trade and the flooding of up to 70 per cent of their markets with dangerous or useless drugs.

However, the MNC lobby working with U.S. support and

(Continued from p.15 Col. 3)



### Third World Consultant Pushing MNC Line

#### Protest by Third World Network

— a grouping of organisations and individuals involved in development issues —

#### Third World Network

87, Cantonment Road, Penang, MALAYSIA.

Dr Halfdan Mahler  
Director General  
WHO  
1211 Geneva 27  
Switzerland

29 April 1986

Dear Dr Mahler

It has come to our knowledge that Mr D C Jayasuriya, a Sri Lankan lawyer has written a book entitled *The Public Health and Economic Dimensions of the New Drug Policy of Bangladesh*, which is sponsored by the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers' Association, based in Geneva.

This report as you maybe aware is an attack on the Bangladesh National Drug Policy. The Bangladesh Drug Policy is based on WHO's Model List of Essential Drugs which has been recommended for all developed and developing countries. As such, the report appears also to be an act of sabotage on the WHO's Policy on Essential Drugs.

More disturbing, Jayasuriya is using his former WHO's consultancy status to give his 'evaluation' of the Bangladesh Drug Policy some measure of legitimacy. This document is now being passed about as a 'WHO document on the Bangladesh Drug Policy'. The Third World Network is very perturbed by this and views it with deep concern.

We appeal to your goodself as Director General of the WHO to institute the following measures:

- (1) The WHO should officially distance itself from the Jayasuriya study, *The Public Health and Economic Dimensions of the New Drug Policy of Bangladesh*.
- (2) The WHO itself should make an independent evaluation of the Bangladesh drug policy, a move that would be not only in its own interest, but also in the interest of a more rational drug policy benefitting consumers all over the world.
- (3) The WHO should take care to see that in future D C Jayasuriya is not hired as a consultant in the organisation, for the role he has played in undermining a policy furthering WHO policy.

We would greatly appreciate that the WHO takes the above measures as soon as possible. This is because WHO's major contribution to health in the area of drugs will be seriously undermined should D C Jayasuriya's report have the effect it so desires.

We seriously hope that you will consider our request as it comes from the peoples of the Third World.

The Third World Network lends its wholehearted support to the WHO for its excellent work and we wish you all the best in your endeavours. Best wishes.

Sincerely  
S M Mohd Idris, J.P.  
Coordinator  
Third World Network

## WHO - Essential Drugs

*The selection of essential drugs.* Technical Report Series 615. WHO, 1977, Excerpt.

"While drugs alone are not sufficient to provide health care, they do play an important role in protecting, maintaining and restoring the health of people. In recent years, there has been a tremendous number of pharmaceutical products marketed; however, there has not been a proportionate improvement in health.

Many pharmaceutical products are marketed with little concern for the differing health needs and priorities of individual countries. Promotional activities of the manufacturers have created a demand greater than actual needs. Since up to 40% of the total health care budget in developing countries may be spent on drugs, the result has been an increase in the cost of health care or a reduction in funds available for other

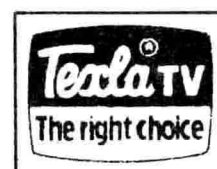
health services. The cost has affected even the affluent nations, and their governments are increasingly worried by the rising expenditure on pharmaceutical products. In developing countries, the problem is magnified by limited economic resources, shortage of trained health personnel, and lack of organised drug policies. In the least developed countries, where communicable diseases and lack of elementary health care are the major medical concerns, large segments of the population are in urgent need of essential drugs.

**It is clear that for the optimum use of limited financial resources the available drugs must be restricted to those proven to be therapeutically effective, to have acceptable safety and to satisfy the health needs of the population. The selected drugs are**

**here called 'essential' drugs, indicating that they are of the utmost importance, and are basic, indispensable and necessary for the health needs of the population.**

The notion that the number of necessary drugs is relatively small is supported by experience. Several developing countries that have adopted limited drugs lists report good acceptance, as well as favourable medical and economic results. Lists and formularies with a limited number of drugs are also successfully used in many developed countries.

A limited list may not provide for the needs of every person but certainly should meet those of the vast majority. Whether or not drugs or pharmaceutical products outside the list are available in the private sector should be a local decision.



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